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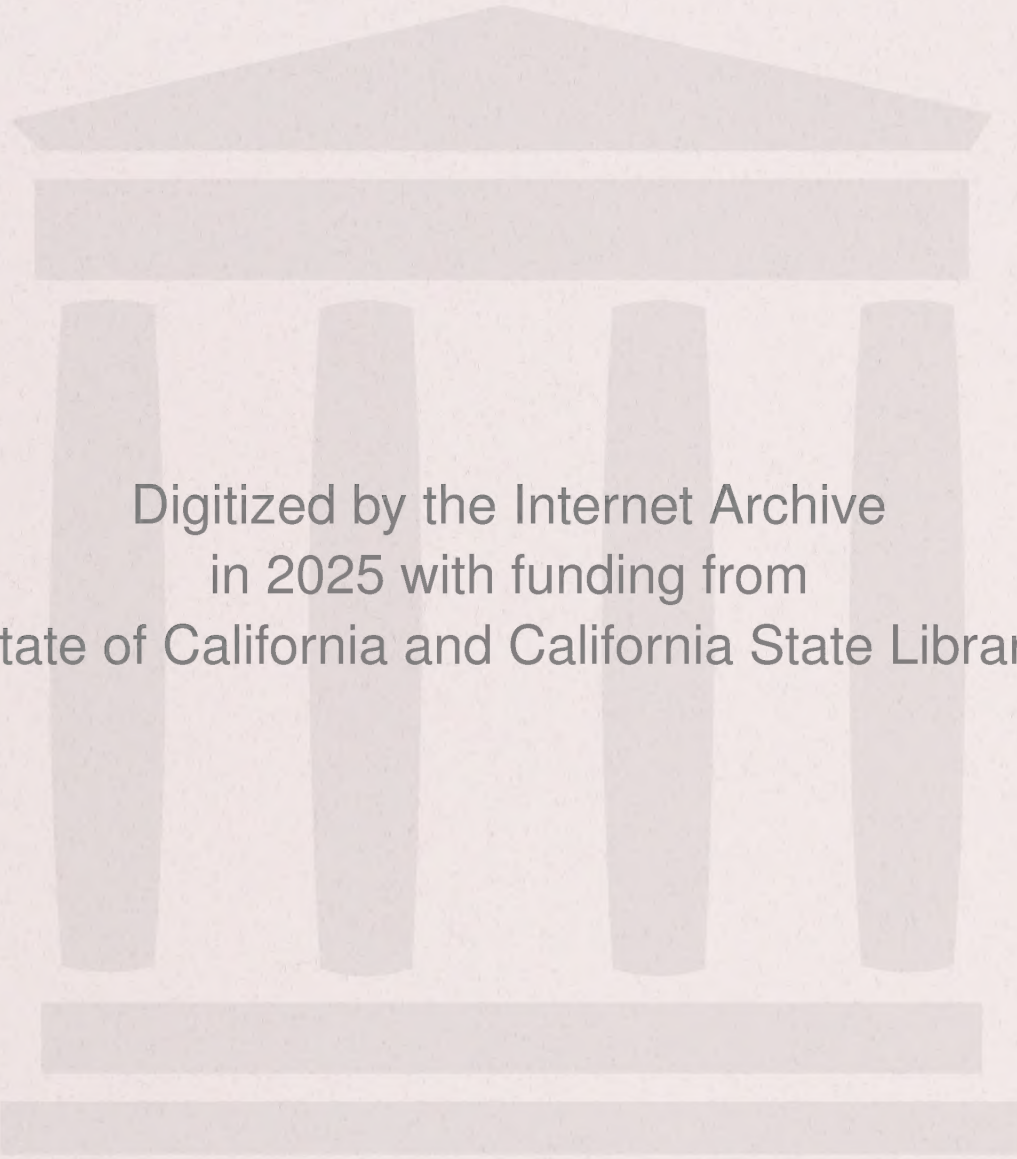
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

CONSERVATION, OPEN SPACE, RECREATION, AND PARKS ELEMENT



VISALIA GENERAL PLAN

June 1989



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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT
707 W. Acequia
Visalia, California 93291

July 1, 1989

The Conservation, Open Space, Recreation & Parks Element update to the Visalia General Plan was adopted by the City Council on June 5, 1989. The following information is included in this document:

1. June 5, 1989 City Council Staff Report and Resolution No. 89-59 (note: Exhibit 1 contains a number of modifications and revisions to the Element's text and maps).
2. October 1988 Conservation, Open Space, Recreation & Parks Element reviewed by the Visalia Parks & Recreation Commission, the Visalia Planning Commission, and the Visalia City Council.
3. November 1988 Negative Declaration and June 1989 Notice of Determination.

To date, these modifications and revisions have not been consolidated into a final document. The final document will not be prepared until the Land Use Element update process has been completed so that only one set of revisions will be required to the Conservation, Open Space, Recreation & Parks Element.

If you have any questions or comments on the Conservation, Open Space, Recreation, Parks Element to the Visalia General Plan, please write or call:

Community Development Department
209/738-3359

VISALIA CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA



Gregory F. Collins — Mayor
Berklev R. Johnson — Vice Mayor
Mary Louise Vivier — Council Member
Bob McLain — Council Member
Don Sharp — Council Member

DATE MONDAY, JUNE 5, 1989
TIME 7:00 P.M.
LOCATION COUNCIL CHAMBERS
CITY HALL

ALL ITEMS LISTED UNDER THE CONSENT CALENDARS ARE CONSIDERED TO BE ROUTINE AND WILL BE ENACTED BY ONE MOTION. IF ANYONE DESIRES DISCUSSION ON ANY ITEM ON THE CONSENT CALENDARS, THE ITEM CAN BE REMOVED AT THE REQUEST OF ANY MEMBER OF THE CITY COUNCIL AND MADE A PART OF THE REGULAR AGENDA.

1. CITIZEN REQUESTS

2. GENERAL CONSENT CALENDAR

(a) Approval of minutes of May 15, 1989.

(b) Authorization to read ordinances by title only

(c) Second Reading of Ordinances:

(1) Ordinance 8909 authorizing establishment of provisions for the City of Visalia special tax financing (Mello-Roos) law.

(2) Ordinance 8910 adding Article 17 to Chapter 14 of the City of Visalia Ordinance Code providing for designated hours for park closure.

(d) Resolution No. 89-51 establishing the salary ranges and classifications for Fiscal Year 1989/90.

(e) November 7, 1989, General Municipal Election:

(1) Resolution No. 89-52 calling the General Municipal Election and requesting consolidation.

(2) Resolution No. 89-53 requesting the County Clerk to render specified services.

(3) Resolution No. 89-54 determining who shall pay for the cost of a Candidate Statement and limiting the number of words.

(f) Introduction of Ordinance No. 8911 accepting the Penal Code requirements concerning selection and training of dispatchers and reimbursement by P.O.S.T. for certain dispatcher training costs.

- (g) Resolution No. 89-55 authorizing the City Manager to execute the agreement with the State of California for Transit Capital Improvement Funds for the Visalia Transportation Center at the Visalia Municipal Airport.
- (h) Introduction of Ordinance No. 8912, Amendment No. 799, adding Section 9206, Amending of Final Maps and Section 9281, Amending of Parcel Maps, to Chapter 20, Subdivision Ordinance
- (i) Authorization to set date of June 19, 1989 for a public hearing on the proposed program for the 1989 Community Development Block Grant Program.
- (j) Authorization to file Notice of Completions:
 - (1) Towsley Estates Subdivision, East side of Pinkham Road, South of Tulare Avenue.
 - (2) Airport Improvement Project, Project No. 401-6089-0522, AIP No. 3-06-0271-06.
- (k) Authorization to advertise the following projects without the requirement of prevailing wage rates:
 - (1) St. John's Parkway & Cain Street construction, Project No. 171-400-6089-9650.
 - (2) Burke Street Park Pond, Project No. 171-6089-9562(a).
- (l) Denial of Claims for Damages:
 - (1) Lonnie Lindley
 - (2) Herman Livingston
 - (3) Juanita Martinez
 - (4) Republic Indemnity Company of America
 - (5) Mike Saporetti/Bob Musselman
 - (6) Xiong et al

3. PLANNING CONSENT CALENDAR

- (a) Resolution No. 89-56 declaring intention to form Open Space District No. 57, Spanish Oaks and setting date of June 19, 1989 as the date of protest hearing.
 - (b) Resolution No. 89-57 approving Conditional Use Permit No. 1140, Water Well Site, 4828 W. Victor Court.
- 4. Opinion from City Attorney on validity of initiative petition.
 - 5. Public hearing for adoption of Sewer Rates for 1989-90. (Resolution 89-58 required)
 - 6. Public hearing for updated Conservation, Open Space, Recreation & Parks Element to the Visalia General Plan. (Resolution No. 89-59 required)

7. Public hearing approving guidelines for protection of Valley Oak trees during development and construction. Introduce an Ordinance updating the Oak Tree Ordinance. (Resolution No. 89-60 and Introduction of Ordinance No. 8913 required)
8. Public hearing declaring an abandonment of Willow Street between Court and Locust Street. (Resolution No. 89-61 required)
9. Continued public hearing on Amendment 795, an amendment to Development Agreement No. 85-02, south side of Highway 198 between Chinowth & Fulgham. (Introduction of Ordinance No. 8914 required)
10. Public hearing:
 - (a) Amendment No. 798, Amending the Northeast Specific Plan designation from R-1-4.5 to R-1-6 for the property located on St. John's Parkway between Babcock and Sonoma. (Resolution No. 89-62 required)
 - (b) Change of Zone No. 797, R-1-4.5 to R-1-6. (Introduction of Ordinance No. 8915 required)
11. Continued public hearing on the Circulation Element of the General Plan; set date of June 19, 1989 for a public hearing on the Transportation Impact Fee Ordinance. (Resolution No. 89-63 required)
12. Public hearing on the 1989-90 budget. (No action required)

--ADJOURN AS CITY COUNCIL AND RECONVENE AS COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY.
13. Public hearing on the 1989-90 Community Redevelopment Agency budget. (No action required)

Next Regular Meeting:
Monday, June 19, 1989, 7:00 p.m.
Council Chambers, City Hall

RESOLUTION NO. 89- 59

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF VISALIA ADOPTING THE UPDATED
CONSERVATION, OPEN SPACE, RECREATION & PARKS ELEMENT
TO THE GENERAL PLAN (GPA NO. 792),
CITY OF VISALIA

WHEREAS, the General Plan of the City of Visalia prescribes policies for the acquisition, development, and maintenance of parks and open space and associated leisure and cultural facilities in the City of Visalia; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Visalia recognizes the need for periodic review of the General Plan; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has directed Leisure and Community Services to prepare the updated Conservation, Open Space, Recreation & Parks Element; and

WHEREAS, the City is currently conducting other planning and engineering studies which will have direct or indirect impact on conservation, open space, recreation and parks policies; and

WHEREAS, public forums with community residents, meetings with special interest groups, and a series of study sessions with the Parks & Recreation Commission, Planning Commission and City Council was conducted on this update; and

WHEREAS, the Park & Recreation Commission of the City of Visalia, after ten (10) days published notice, did hold a public hearing on November 22, 1988 and recommended adoption of the updated Conservation, Open Space, Recreation & Parks Element with staff modifications to the City Council; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission of the City of Visalia, after ten (10) days published notice, did hold a public hearing on December 12, 1988 and recommended adoption of the updated Conservation, Open Space, Recreation & Parks Element with staff modifications to the City Council; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Visalia, after ten (10) days published notice, did hold public hearings on January 16, 1989 and June 5, 1989; and

WHEREAS, a Negative Declaration was prepared pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines and indicates that adoption of the updated Conservation, Open Space, Recreation & Parks Element will not result in in any adverse environmental impacts; and

WHEREAS, the Visalia City Council did review and approve the Negative Declaration on the proposal; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of Visalia makes the following findings based on the evidence presented:

1. The Draft Conservation, Open Space, Recreation & Parks Element (maps and text) as modified by the City Council is consistent with the overall land use objectives outlined in the City's General Plan. The updated Element will facilitate community growth and foster workable relationships land within the planning area.
2. The Draft Conservation, Open Space, Recreation & Parks Element promotes the conservation and enhancement of natural, cultural and historic resources in the planning area.
3. The Draft Conservation, Open Space, Recreation & Parks Element encourages open space preservation and enhancement in the planning area.
4. The Draft Conservation, Open Space, Recreation & Parks Element facilitates development of a high quality public park system for varied outdoor recreational opportunities.
5. The Draft Conservation, Open Space, Recreation & Parks Element provides for a range of leisure, recreational and cultural program and facilities for all segments of the community.
6. The Draft Conservation, Open Space, Recreation & Parks Element structures an implementation program for achieving conservation, open space, recreation and park goals.
7. The Draft Conservation, Open Space, Recreation & Parks Element is adopted including text and map revisions as described in Exhibit 1 attached hereto.

PASSED AND ADOPTED: June 5, 1989

DONNA L. HALL, CITY CLERK

STATE OF CALIFORNIA)
COUNTY OF TULARE) ss.
CITY OF VISALIA)

I, Donna Hall, City Clerk of the City of Visalia, certify the foregoing is the full and true Resolution 89-59 passed and adopted by the Council of the City of Visalia at a regular meeting held on June 5, 1989.

DATED: June 6, 1989

DONNA L. HALL, CITY CLERK

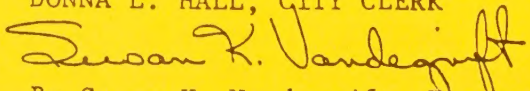

By Susan K. Vandegrift, Deputy

EXHIBIT 1

.. CONSERVATION, OPEN SPACE, RECREATION & PARKS ELEMENT

1. Needs Assessment Modifications/Revisions

- a. clearly call out that 7.6 acre/1,000 is the community standard for park land; cite standards of 3 acres/1,000 portion for school sites and 0.6 acres/1,000 portion for private open space)
- b. stress that the City's 4 acres/1,000 standard is a goal to maintain not necessarily attain within a defined time period. The existing historic deficit should not be reduced at the expense of new community development
- c. detail why regional park space (Plaza, Mooney Grove and Cutler) are not calculated in the City's 4 acres/1,000 standard.
- d. expand open space inventory to include facilities like Visalia Country Club, Sierra View Golf Course, etc.

2. Goal 1

- a. develop an implementing policy requiring the CIP to allocate funds for waterway corridor pilot demonstration projects on each of the designated waterways in the planning area.
- b. clarify waterway development concept (urban to 'natural' transition area) through an implementing policy and supporting graphic.
- c. include an implementing policy which requires that a feasibility study be carried out for waterway corridor acquisition, development and maintenance as well as development priority
- d. cite tree diameter and height specifications in community waterway standards to determine corridor width (i.e. 4" dbh or 20' high)
- e. include an implementing policy outlining mitigation measures for waterway corridor development through established residential areas where waterway banks are too narrow for a bikepath (i.e., specify typical design measures to reduce privacy and security concerns, piping considerations, etc.)
- f. include an implementing policy to investigate feasibility of City participation for loop streets etc.(see policy Community Waterway policy 1.2.6)
- g. expand kit fox treatment (on Figure 2, Vegetation & Habitat, and text) to indicate potential kit fox habitat around the City's entire existing urban form - detail that future specific and master plans as well as development

Exhibit 1 (continued)

proposals will be administered through the City's Environmental Coordinator and the CEQA review process. As a further clarification, develop a supplemental policy to amend the City's Site Plan Review and CEQA processes to establish when California Department of Fish & Game early consultation is required for development proposals

- h. modify waterway standards to include a method to review proposals on small and/or narrow sites adjacent to waterways that would accommodate waterway conservation and development objectives
- g. develop an additional air quality objective or implementing policies which promote energy conservation as a means to mitigate regional air quality concerns (ensure consistency with updated Land Use and Circulation Elements, etc.)
- i. ensure consistency between Draft groundcover and tree lists with Draft Landscaping Design Manual
- j. add a policy stating that no mineral areas of regional or statewide significance have been identified in the Visalia planning area to date. If any sources are identified in the future the City shall adopt appropriate conservation measures.

3. Goal 3

- a. modify implementing policy 3.1.3 (b) to clarify that nonresidential (i.e. commercial and industrial) refers to large regional/national enterprises (voluntary)
- b. modify implementing policy 3.2.4 from 'require' to 'investigate the need to require' and add large-scale multi-family
- c. eliminate 15 to 20% range from implementing policy 3.2.4(a)
- d. delete implementing policy 3.4.1 because it is premature; coordinate route planning and location criteria through recommended Bicycle Committee and updates to the Land Use and Circulation elements
- e. add an implementing policy which would promote investigation of the Tulare Co. landfill for recreational use such as BMX track, midget racing, etc.

4. Goal 5

- a. delete the timing reference to the year 1990 for the quality of life bond
- b. introduce qualifying language which clarifies that a bond measure would be a last resort method to finance Element programs
- c. add an implementation policy for new staff positions like a full time grant writer and foundation coordinator
- e. add upgrade to Summers Park to list of Northeast Neighborhood Quadrant project list

Exhibit 1 (continued)

- f. add an implementing policy to investigate the feasibility of forming special park and/or assessment districts
- g. add an implementing policy to create a policy implementation matrix
- i. delete reference to Parks in Fund Raising Objective B

86012
EX1CCRES.1

June 5, 1989

MEMO TO: Visalia City Council
FROM: Eunice Riso, Leisure & Community Services Director and
Stephen J. Peck, Redevelopment/Advance Planning Manager
SUBJECT: Re-Open Discussion and Adopt the updated Conservation, Open Space,
Recreation & Parks Element to the Visalia General Plan (GPA No. 792)

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council re-open discussion on the updated Conservation, Open Space, Recreation & Parks Element and approve the Draft with the proposed modifications by approving Resolution No. 89-59 which certifies the Negative Declaration and adopts General Plan Amendment No. 792, updating the 1981 Conservation, Open Space, Recreation & Parks Element.

BACKGROUND

On January 16, 1989, the City Council took public input and closed the public hearing on the update to the General Plan's Conservation, Open Space, Recreation & Parks Element. At that time, the Council continued further discussion on the project until issues related to community-wide waterway policies, park project priorities and funding were clarified.

The Park & Recreation Commission and staff met several times in February and March to develop general selection criteria to prioritize projects and to review funding issues as well as review waterway corridor rationale and policies. On April 24, 1989 at a City Council Work Session, these issues were presented and discussed with the Council. A brief summary of waterway issues is outlined in Attachment 1. Project priorities and funding issues are detailed in Attachment 2.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The purpose of this Element update is to 1) provide a more balanced treatment between conservation and open space issues with more traditional strengths of park planning and recreation programming, 2) develop a series of clear and concise goal, objective and policy statements and implementation strategies for the planning period to the year 2020, and 3) create an improved Element format for easier use and reference.

The Draft Element has accomplished the update's broad objectives. The updated Element, when adopted, will serve as a long-range guide for community development as well as a ready reference for daily issues involving conservation, open space, recreation and parks. Project highlights include:

- o expanded treatment of community waterways and resource issues
- o revised needs assessment including development of local guidelines for Visalia park facilities and improvements

- o reorganized goal and policy section which reduces the existing Element's 26 goals to five with supporting objectives and implementing policies
- o detailed implementation section which focuses on funding needs, sources and strategy
- o improved format which invites rather than discourages use

REVIEW PROCESS

The Draft Element has been reviewed by City Departments with interests in land acquisition, park development and maintenance; habitat protection and enhancement; waterway treatment, and recreational programming. Several state county, and private interest groups have reviewed the Draft. A summary of this public review process is outlined on pages 2 and 3 of the Draft. Additional public review has involved a second public forum held on November 2, 1988, a November 15, 1988 meeting with an ad hoc Chamber of Commerce committee, a November 16, 1988 Planning Commission study session, and a December 12, 1988 City Council work session.

On November 22, 1988, the Visalia Park & Recreation Commission held a public hearing and voted 5 to 0 to recommend approval of the Draft to the City Council with staff modifications. On December 12, 1988, the Planning Commission held a public hearing and voted 4 to 0 to recommend approval of the Draft to the City Council. On January 11, 1989, the Historic Preservation Advisory Board made a motion to support the Draft.

ISSUES

As a result of public forums, work sessions, meetings and the Park & Recreation Commission's public hearing a number of modifications have been made for the Draft. These modifications are listed in Exhibit 1 of Resolution No. 89-

FUTURE ACTION

Successful implementation of the updated Element will require a number of immediate future actions. Representative future actions include:

- o complete recommended text and map revisions
- o make map and text revisions resulting from the updated Land Use Element (i.e., revised population projections, new Conservation-Open Space designations, etc.)
- o integrate the Element's long-range park and open space planning projects into the City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP)
- o carry out long-range planning projects such as the community waterway feasibility study, school siting master plan, creating staff positions for funding, etc.

COUNCIL ACTION: Approved as Recommended
June 5, 1989

Attachment 1

Waterway Corridor Policies

The primary purpose of the Draft's community waterway objectives and policies is to preserve and enhance plant and wildlife habitats along selected planning area waterways. This underlying conservation objective is specified by several goals in the currently adopted Element. Conservation and preservation of riparian land is mandated by the Dept. of Fish and Game. Local conservation techniques and management are evolving from several City planning and engineering projects. Additional objectives include: 1) maintaining traditional flood protection and irrigation functions, 2) promoting limited public access, and 3) establishing open space links (bikeways and trails) between various destinations like the Downtown, Plaza and Cutler Parks.

The Draft establishes a three-tier system of varying waterway corridor widths for: 1) St. John's River, 2) Mill, Packwood and Cameron creeks, and 3) Modoc, Evans, and Persian ditches.

The Draft's waterway corridor concept rests on two basic points: 1) using a buffer or development setback along both sides of a waterway as a method to reduce potential adverse impacts of development on water-oriented plant and wildlife habitat and 2) using existing riparian trees like Valley Oaks, Sycamores, Cottonwoods, Willows, etc. to further define the width of a waterway corridor.

The Draft's multi-purpose approach to waterway corridor planning recognizes that continuous coordination and flexibility are required because of competing or conflicting waterway interests. This multitude of interests (conservation; flood protection; irrigation; recreation; and federal, state, local, and private agencies) have been a primary reason for the City's lack of progress in dealing with new urban development adjacent to waterways in a comprehensive manner. In response to these issues, the City is developing an 'integrated management' process to involve all interests in waterway area development. This process is most evident along the St. John's River for work on the river park. A second action measure involves the completion of an acquisition/development feasibility study (see page 82a of the Draft). Objectives of this comprehensive study would include: 1) liability and public safety, 2) flood protection and irrigation coordination, 3) corridor maintenance, 4) acquisition and financing, 5) landscaping and improvements, 6) waterway corridor priorities, 7) water flow and quality, 8) continuing coordination with waterway owners and users. Please note, a number of these objectives are being considered in current discussions with various irrigation and ditch companies and the water conservation district. The Draft's waterway corridor policies would be amended depending upon the feasibility study's findings and recommendations.

Attachment 2

Park, Improvement & Long-Range Projects - Priorities and Funding

Table 1 details the Draft's revised proposed project list as well as estimated costs for the 30-year planning period. The list reflects the Draft's emphasis on neighborhood development. Table 1 also targets the proposed funding program including the allocation of these costs to various funds and sources. In summary, this analysis indicates that no immediate adjustments to the Park Acquisition & Development Fee will be necessary to fund the Draft's neighborhood park program. Remaining projects like mini, community, and regional parks will require supplemental funding. The Draft's funding approach for these projects includes:

- o periodically updating the project list
- o re-analyzing projections every 3 to 5 years
- o relegating 'big-ticket' items to a pay-as-you-go posture which will require creating new staff positions for funding, as well as developing a 'quality of life' bond measure for consideration in 3 to 5 years.

86012
CCPUBHRG.2

VISALIA CONSERVATION, OPEN SPACE, RECREATION AND PARK ELEMENT
PROPOSED FUNDING PLAN
(\$1000)

	<div>TOTAL ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES</div>								<div>TOTAL ESTIMATED REVENUES</div>					
PARK FACILITY	<div>-----1990-2000-----</div>			<div>-----2000-2010-----</div>		<div>-----2010-2020-----</div>								
	ACQ	MISC	DEV	ACQ	DEV	ACQ	DEV	TOTAL	PARK FEE	OTHER AGENCIES	FUND BALANCE	OTHER SOURCES	TOTAL SOURCES	UNFUNDED BALANCE
NORTHEAST QUADRANT--#1>>														
Neighborhood Parks														
Vine-Conyer	212				300			512	512				512	0
*Goddard-Douglas	212				300			512	512				512	0
*Cain-Buena Vista	212				300			512	512				512	0
Court-(N)Riggin				212			300	512	512				512	0
Divisadero-(N)Riggin				212			300	512	512				512	0
Sol-Douglas						212	300	512	512				512	0
Sol-Oakes Ditch						212	300	512	512				512	0
SUBTOTAL	636	0	0	424	900	424	1,200	3,584	3,584	0	0	0	3,584	0
Park/Storm Drainage Facilities														
Burke/Goshen (PP)	212				300			512					0	(512)
Riverbend (PP)	212				300			512					0	(512)
Mooney/Wren (PP)				212			300	512					0	(512)
*McAuliff/Houston (PP)	212				300			512					0	(512)
*McAuliff/Mill Creek (PP)				212			300	512					0	(512)
*McAuliff/Stapp (PP)				212			300	512	25				25	(487)
*N. Burke/Buena Vista (PP)			600					600	600				600	0
SUBTOTAL	636	0	600	636	900	0	900	3,672	625	0	0	0	625	(3,047)
SUBTOTAL	1,272	0	600	1,060	1,800	424	2,100	7,256	4,209	0	0	0	4,209	(3,047)
Conservation/Open Space														
													0	0
Mill Creek-Evans Ditch	297				100			397					0	(397)
**B. Maddox-Main St.	500		276					776		776			776	0
**Robo Jungle (Jennings Ditch)	425		150					575		575			575	0
													0	0
													0	0
													0	0
Mini Parks													0	0
Kaweah			220					220		220			220	0
													0	0
													0	0
													0	0
Community facilities - #1													0	0
													0	0
Senior Center			130					130					0	(130)
N. Visalia Ctr/Summers Park			800					800					0	(800)
Fairview			700		500			1,200					0	(1,200)
Recreation			700		500			1,200					0	(1,200)

TABLE 1

VISALIA CONSERVATION, OPEN SPACE, RECREATION AND PARK ELEMENT
PROPOSED FUNDING PLAN
(\$1000)

[illegible]

VISALIA CONSERVATION, OPEN SPACE, RECREATION AND PARK ELEMENT
PROPOSED FUNDING PLAN
(\$1000)

[illegible]

VISALIA CONSERVATION, OPEN SPACE, RECREATION AND PARK ELEMENT
PROPOSED FUNDING PLAN
(\$1000)

[illegible]

FILE NAME: PARK FUND
21-Apr-89

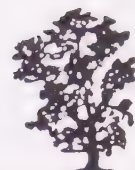


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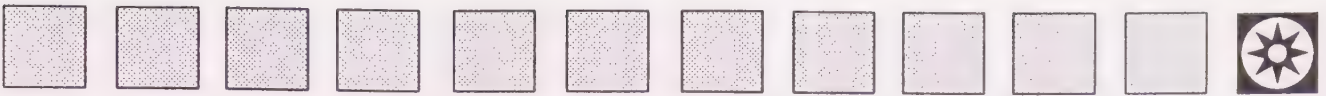
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INTRODUCTION

THE GENERAL PLAN

The General Plan is a long-term, comprehensive framework for the physical, social and economic development issues in a community's planning area. Visalia's General Plan is a long-range guide for attaining the City's goals within its ultimate service area and accommodating its population to the year 2020. A comprehensive document, it coordinates all components of the City's physical development.

State law requires all cities and counties to adopt and maintain a General Plan. It must include seven elements (Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Conservation, Open Space, Noise and Safety). These mandatory elements may be supplemented by optional elements at the discretion of the local jurisdiction. The Visalia General Plan includes the following optional elements: Urban Boundaries, Seismic Safety, Historic Preservation, Scenic Highways, Recreation and Parks. Each General Plan Element must be consistent with the others and consistent with other City policies and ordinances.

The General Plan may be amended by minor adjustments each year or, in the longer term, by major revisions or updates. Procedures to amend the General Plan are outlined in Government Code Sections 65350 et seq. The General Plan may be amended only "in the public interest," and only with broad support for a revision necessary to accommodate changing community conditions or attitudes. Each mandatory General Plan element (text and maps) may be amended as many as four times per year. State law does not establish a schedule for major revisions to optional elements (except every five years for the Housing Element). However, review is recommended every five years.

CONSERVATION, OPEN SPACE, RECREATION AND PARKS ELEMENT

This element of the Visalia General Plan combines two state-mandated elements (Conservation and Open Space) with the optional elements of Recreation and Parks. It forms the framework for conservation of natural resources and development of park and recreation facilities in the City and its Urban Area Boundary (planning area). Policies ensure that open space and park acquisition, as well as recreation programs development, will protect long-term public use and enjoyment of the area's natural resources.

Requirements for the Conservation Element are detailed in Government Code Section 65302(d). This portion of the Element includes "the conservation, development and utilization of natural resources, including water and its hydraulic force, forests, soils, rivers, and other waters, harbors, fisheries, wildlife, minerals and other natural resources."



Government Code Section 65560 et seq. defines open space land as any area of land and/or water which is essentially unimproved and devoted to the following purposes:

- Open space for the preservation of natural resources
- Open space for managed production of resources
- Open space for outdoor recreation
- Open space for public health and safety

State General Plan law requires that open space plans include specific implementation programs which a local jurisdiction intends to pursue.

Parks are a primary component of the City's open space system and its recreational programs. Assessing future park and recreation program needs is a primary objective of this element.

This revised General Plan Element amends and supersedes the 1980-1990 Conservation, Open Space, Recreation and Parks Element to the Visalia General Plan which was approved by the City Council on September 9, 1981.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE ELEMENT UPDATE PROCESS

An underlying objective of this update was to balance Visalia's traditional strengths in providing park facilities and diverse recreation programs with a renewed interest in the importance of conserving the community's natural resources and preserving open space opportunities.

Throughout the summer and fall of 1987 and winter of 1988, various agencies, neighboring jurisdictions and key interest group representatives were contacted for information and suggestions. Formal public participation on the Element update began in September 1987 with an open meeting between the City Council and the Park & Recreation Commission. Several project ideas and opportunities were discussed including new parks, trails and bikeways, visual resources, resource conservation, community programs, operations and maintenance, and financing.

On November 12, 1987, a second public forum was held to discuss the update and its review process with interested citizens, decision-makers, and City staff. The purpose of the forum was to solicit public comments, concerns and opinions on this community-wide planning project.

In January 1988, a series of meetings was held with community interest groups. The first meeting, with representatives from the Kaweah Delta Water Conservation District and irrigation ditch companies, began the coordination of water-related components of the Element update (in accordance with Government Code Section 65302(d)). The second meeting was held with a cross-section of community developers and consultants. Issues discussed included natural resources, creek and ditch treatment, bikeways, park space standards and park acquisition and development fee modifications.



A third public forum was held in October, 1988, with a joint meeting of the City Council and the Park and Recreation Commission to review the Draft Element. Public hearings were held in _____ and _____ 1988 before the Parks and Recreation Commission, the Planning Commission and the City Council. The City Council adopted the Element on _____ 1988 by Resolution No. 88-XXXX.

ELEMENT ORGANIZATION

The Conservation, Open Space, Recreation and Parks Element is organized into four chapters: Summary of Goals and Objectives; Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment; Goals, Objectives and Policies; and Implementation. The Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment chapter outlines the existing conditions of natural, cultural, and recreation resources in the planning area and assesses planning issues and needs for the future. The Goals, Objectives, and Policies chapter contains statements, defined below, which establish the City's direction on conservation, open space, recreation, and park issues.

Goal: A future vision of conditions related to public health, safety or general welfare toward which the city directs planning and implementation.

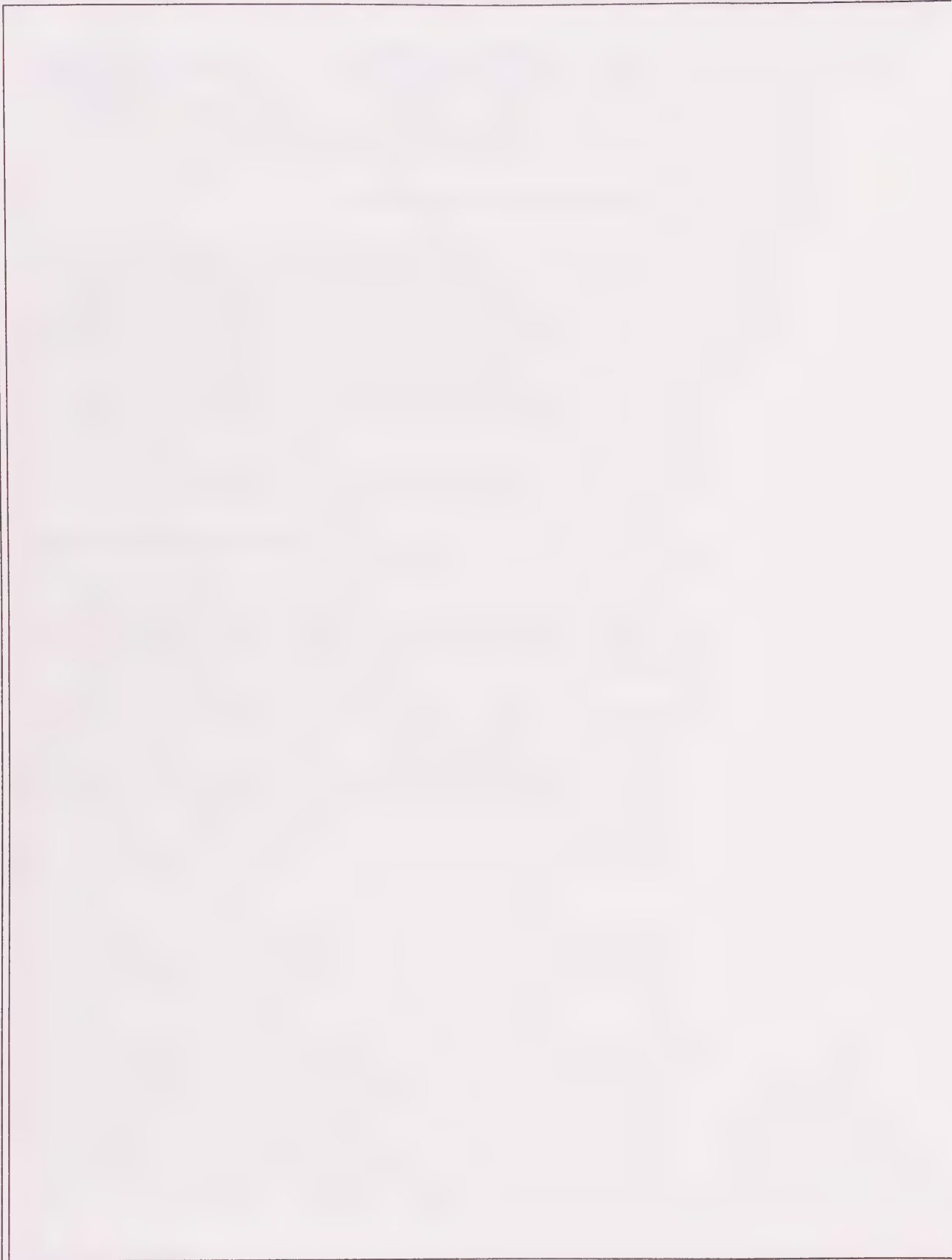
Objectives: A specific condition which is an intermediate step in attaining a goal. Several objectives may relate to a goal.

Implementing Policy: A specific policy statement that guides decision-making and suggests actions to be carried out in meeting objectives and attaining goals. Policies can be broad in scope or directed at specific sites or resources.

Standard: A measurable rule establishing a level of quality or quantity that must be complied with or satisfied.

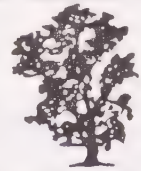
The Implementation chapter summarizes various strategies and actions for the City to realize recommended goals and policies.







SUMMARY OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES



The Conservation, Open Space, Recreation and Parks Element of the Visalia General Plan has five goal statements and a series of objectives, implementing policies, and standards. The Element's goals and objectives are listed below:

GOAL 1.

Conserve, restore and enhance significant natural, cultural and historic resources to sustain the Visalia planning area's environmental quality.

Objectives:

Provide for long-range community water needs and protect water quality and quantity.

Optimize the use and conservation of the community's surface and groundwater resources.

Protect water resources vital to the health of the community's residents and important to the planning area's ecological and economic stability.

Preserve and enhance selected planning area waterways and adjacent corridors as valuable community resources which serve as plant and wildlife habitats, as well as flood control and irrigation components and as connections between open space areas.

Continue to coordinate development of a community-wide waterway program for irrigation/flood control and recreation use with water districts, irrigation companies, private water companies and state agencies.

Strive to improve air quality for the entire planning area.

Preserve and protect natural habitat areas along community waterways.

Protect and enhance natural vegetation throughout the Visalia planning area.

Protect and enhance wildlife listed as rare, endangered, threatened and candidate species.

Preserve and protect historic features and archaeological resources of the Visalia planning area including its agricultural surroundings for aesthetic, scientific, educational and cultural values.



GOAL 2.

Create and preserve an open space system in the Visalia planning area to meet a variety of needs.

Objectives:

Create and protect open space for the preservation of natural resources.

Create and preserve open space for outdoor recreation.

Preserve and protect agricultural use on lands in and surrounding the Visalia planning area for open space purposes and for the managed production of resources.

Create and maintain open space for public health and safety in areas which require special management or regulation.

GOAL 3.

Develop a high quality public park system which provides adequate space and facilities for varied recreational opportunities which are conveniently accessible to all Visalia residents.

Objectives:

Acquire adequate park sites for future City growth.

Bring the amount of Visalia park land into compliance with the City's adopted standards.

Provide park sites which respond to the needs of the City's diverse population, including waterway systems, trails and bikeways for pedestrians, joggers and bicyclists, as well as non-traditional types of recreation such as skateboarding.

Design parks and recreation facilities which will enhance community identity and which will serve the recreation and social needs of Visalians of all ages, economic situations and physical abilities.

Maximize opportunity for joint use of public land and facilities such as schools, stormwater ponding basins and other recreation areas under public jurisdiction suitable for recreation.

Designate and periodically update a safe and feasible trail and bikeway system (on-and off-street) for commuting, recreation and other trips.



GOAL 4.

Provide a range of leisure, recreation, and cultural programs and facilities that are accessible and affordable to all segments of the community.

Objectives:

Continue to provide a combination of recreation and social service programs and facilities through neighborhood community centers.

Continue to develop and expand special programs for teens, senior citizens, and ethnic populations.

Ensure that a wide variety of quality sports and aquatics opportunities are available to the community.

Continue to provide the community's special populations with specially adapted recreation programs to increase independent living and community involvement.

Continue Visalia's strong volunteer program by expanding meaningful opportunities for community service.

Establish Visalia as a regional cultural and performing arts center in the San Joaquin Valley.

GOAL 5.

Structure an implementation program for achieving the policies of this Element through a combination of public and private funds, regulatory processes, and innovative strategies.

Objectives:

Submit a "quality of life" bond issue or tax increase proposal to the voters in June or November of 1990.

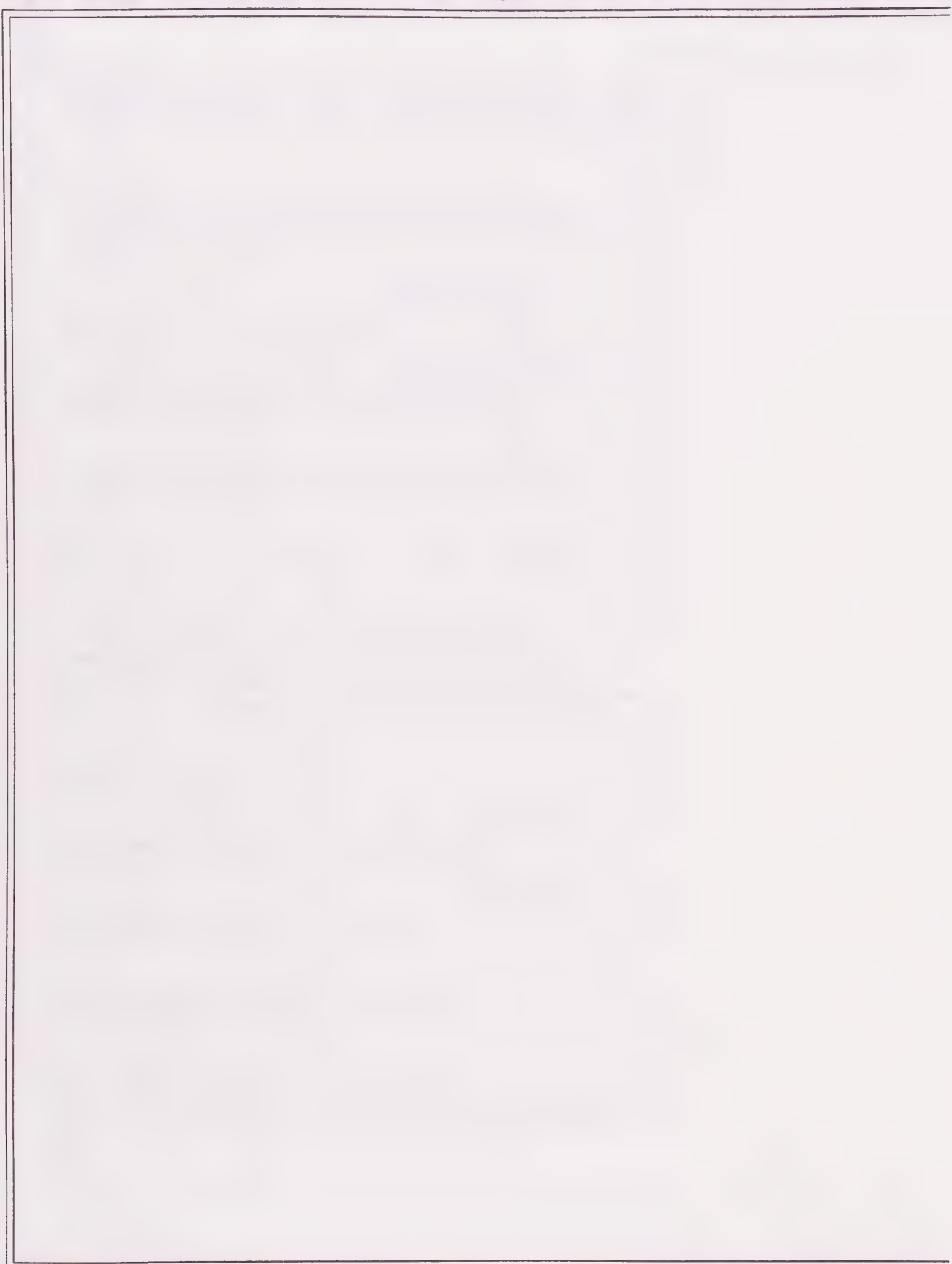
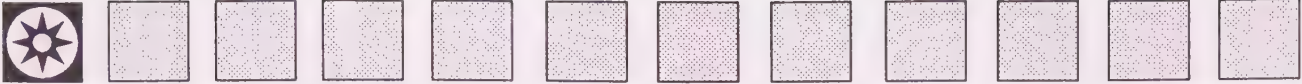
Develop a non-profit foundation or a "Friends of Visalia Parks" program to provide funding in a wide variety of ways for the sole advancement of parks and recreation.

Ensure that Visalia receives its full share of federal and state grant funds including matching and competitive grants.

Continue to explore expanded inter-agency agreements and joint powers agreements with other jurisdictions and private conservation organizations.

Utilize ordinances, easements, restrictive covenants and other tools to negotiate with landowners and developers to ensure that significant natural resources and open space are protected during development.







EXISTING CONDITIONS AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT



Natural areas, open space, trails and bikeways, parks, recreation and cultural facilities, all contribute to Visalia's quality of life. This chapter identifies the community's existing natural resources, open space, and recreational and cultural facilities and programs, and analyzes future planning needs.

NATURAL RESOURCES

GROUNDWATER SUPPLY AND QUALITY

Visalia is located on alluvial fan deposits of sand, silt, gravel and clay. These materials form groundwater aquifers as surface water seeps into the sand and gravel layers and flows along gradients created by confining layers of silt and clay. The groundwater aquifer is separated into two water-bearing zones (a deep and shallow zone) by clay which underlies the western section of Tulare County. Visalia overlies a locally confined aquifer extending north of Kern County, east of Highway 99. The aquifer beneath Visalia provides a supply of high quality water. However, water quality deteriorates west of Highway 99. Replenishment of the groundwater bodies in this region is believed to result from percolation of surface flows only, with little or no known subsurface inflow to the groundwater basin (Tulare County, Environmental Management Element, 1972).

Visalia's public water supply relies on groundwater pumped and distributed from over 50 wells by private water service companies. The California Water Service Company is the major water supplier. Average demand is 17.4 mgd with a peak demand of 32 mgd. This public water supply meets all state and federal standards (California Water Service Co., 1988).

The City also operates a water system, pumping from five wells to serve the Visalia Industrial Park, the Goshen Avenue area west of Road 84 and the Visalia Municipal Airport. The system has a pumping capacity of 11.5 mgd with an average demand of .57 mgd.

In general, groundwater is of adequate quality throughout the planning area. However, groundwater has been contaminated in two areas by past industrial operations. Wood preservatives from a 1940's utility pole treatment pool contaminated groundwater at the southeast corner of Ben Maddox Way and Goshen Avenue. Groundwater contamination from toxic chemical solvents has occurred at several sites along Goshen Avenue in the vicinity of Shirk Road. Contamination at these locations is the result of outdated on-site waste disposal operations. Groundwater contamination at the Ben Maddox Way location is considered to be contained on-site. Clean up abatement orders have been issued for the Goshen Avenue sites.



The City's Storm Drainage Master Plan, adopted in 1988, provides a comprehensive analysis of storm drainage conditions for five basin areas served by the City's major waterways. The plan identifies three possible locations for groundwater recharge facilities and storage basins; these locations are subject to revision depending on consolidation of proposed basins and park and recreation needs. Key issues identified through the Storm Drainage Master Plan focus on water conservation and preserving groundwater quality and quantity for all future uses, including recreation and wildlife/vegetation uses .

Groundwater quality and quantity objectives and policies listed in Goal 1 emphasize preserving groundwater and water conservation.

SURFACE WATER

Because of its location at the base of the Sierra Nevada and in the heart of the Kaweah River's delta system, Visalia is laced with a variety of waterways.

The waterway network includes the St. John's River, Mill Creek, Packwood Creek and Cameron Creek. The Kaweah Delta Water Conservation District administers a plan for irrigation water delivery and maintains the natural channels in the Kaweah River system. Also included in this waterway network are several irrigation ditches which traverse the City's planning area. These include Modoc, Oakes, Tulare, Persian, Evans and Watson ditches. A number of irrigation companies operate these individual irrigation ditches. These waterways are intermittent and supplemented by water released from Terminus Dam. Constructed in 1962 and operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the dam is the primary flood protection facility affecting the Kaweah River delta system. Visalia experienced several major floods in 1950, 1955, 1966 and 1969.

Figure 1 illustrates flooding and drainage characteristics in the planning area.

Figure 6 in the Goals, Objectives and Policies section illustrates community waterways and policies for their use.

Historically, these waterways have been regarded as significant community elements for flood control, irrigation water conveyance and urban stormwater runoff. In addition to their historic uses, these waterways have been recognized for riparian plant and animal habitat as well as for scenic and recreational potential. Riparian is defined as land area adjacent to freshwater bodies, both perennial and intermittent watercourses, aquatic wetlands and estuaries whose transported water provides sufficient soil moisture in excess of local precipitation to support associated plant and animal communities (California Riparian Systems, 1984).

The City has historically disposed of storm runoff by directing it to the network of creeks and ditches. Irrigation companies responsible for operation and maintenance of these channels have recently refused to accept additional storm runoff. In response, the City has developed and continues to develop a series of park/ponds to detain runoff, discharging it into creeks and ditches after peak storm runoff has subsided. The park/pond sites identified in the Storm Drainage Master Plan can serve both to alleviate



storm water runoff and provide open space and recreational amenities. Developing park/ponds maximizes opportunities for dual use of land, but in some cases, recreation needs and runoff detention are not compatible. As a result, some sites will be more appropriately developed for a single purpose.

The 1980 Conservation, Open Space, Recreation and Parks Element stressed the need to evaluate the use and enhancement of natural areas along waterways. It encouraged creating links between parks, schools, recreation areas, and neighborhoods by using greenways along creeks and ditches. A 1987 study (Knopf and Jardin, 1987) addressed long-standing issues related to community use of creeks and ditches in Visalia. The report describes the characteristics of the St. John's River, Mill Creek, Packwood Creek and Modoc, Persian and Evans ditches. It details typical channel conditions and locates opportunities to enhance riparian habitat, create open space and establish trails. Significant findings of this report are illustrated in Figure 6. A summary follows:

St. John's River. The St. John's forms the northeastern City edge. Opportunities for maintaining and restoring riparian habitat along this corridor include several islands with remnants of riparian forest. Phase 1 of a regional linear park is located along the south bank of the river. This park space could eventually evolve into a river park system running from Cutler Park to Demaree Road with bike or pedestrian trails.

Modoc Ditch branches off from the St. John's River and flows west. This ditch contains several stands of mature oak trees, and its alignment carries it adjacent to the future Fairview Park. Constraints for use of this ditch as a trail occur as the ditch flows through the several subdivisions, where existing residential lots constrict the width of the channel.

Mill Creek is the central water course through the City. On the eastern end of the creek there are numerous areas of dense natural riparian vegetation. As the creek enters the central part of town, it passes areas of mature oak groves and then undergoes varying degrees of encroachment from buildings, parking lots, and non-native landscaping. It is dropped into culverts and concrete channels in several downtown locations. There are areas within the central part of the City which maintain the creek in its natural, healthy state including the Tulare County Courthouse and Civic Center and Redwood High School's Sierra Vista Campus. Further to the west, Mill Creek passes through largely rural residential areas to a point where it forks into north and south branches. This area is densely populated with oak trees.

The **Persian Ditch** system is a southwestern branch of Mill Creek which spills several times as it flows west through undeveloped land towards Plaza Park and the Visalia Municipal Airport. Where the Persian Ditch forks, there are dense populations of oaks and other riparian vegetation. The north branch of the Persian Ditch cuts directly across Plaza Park and is an ideal setting for pedestrian and bicycle trails.

Evans Ditch flows through numerous residential neighborhoods where the banks of the ditch are often too narrow to accommodate trails. There are numerous areas along the ditch which are open to visual access; if restored, these areas could improve the aesthetic qualities of the creek. Evans Ditch passes through several sites which are proposed for future schools and parks and where the natural features of the ditch could be enhanced.



Packwood Creek forms a portion of the City's southern edge, winding through primarily undeveloped vacant lands or agricultural lands on the City's east and west. It runs adjacent to Blain Park at Court Street.

Cameron Creek, a waterway not discussed in the report, flows south of the City through Mooney Grove Park and agricultural lands.

Issues related to surface water listed in Goal 1 focus on promoting public access to the waterways, while protecting flood control and irrigation needs. This public access would encourage scenic, open space, and recreation opportunities while minimizing adverse impacts to riparian habitat.

AIR QUALITY

Visalia lies in the Tulare County portion of the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin. The Valley's climate and weather patterns contribute to the creation and containment of air pollution. Current air pollution in the area is largely due to local motor vehicle emissions and pollutants from the metropolitan areas north and west of the City. Local levels of emissions will become more significant as the number of motor vehicles increases with population and employment growth.

Tulare County is designated as a non-attainment area for ozone and particulates because it exceeds national ambient air quality standards. The County has a non-attainment plan for ozone administered by the Tulare County Air Pollution Control District.

Air quality is monitored locally at the California Air Resources Board's station at Main and Church Streets in downtown Visalia. According to 1986 data collected at the monitoring station, the area exceeded the California standard of 0.10 parts per million (ppm) for ozone on 95 days. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency air standards require particulate emissions control of all particles 10 microns or smaller. This standard is also exceeded throughout the year.

Recognizing the negative impacts to health and area crop yields that poor air quality creates, policies outlined in Goal 1 promote ways to improve the area's air quality.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL VEGETATION

"A luxuriant growth of grass and the air fragrant with the perfume of flowers. The sound of flowing brooks and the notes of the wild birds greet the ear . . . the whole scene is overshadowed by groves of majestic oaks and the eye can wander down long avenues until lost in the shadows of their foliage."

This was the scene recorded in 1913 by a survey party in the Kaweah River delta, when the area which is now Visalia area was covered with over 400 square miles of Valley Oak woodland. Streams traversed the area, creating rich bottomland soil and providing riparian habitat for birds and wildlife.



Today, much of the original forest is gone, but scattered Valley Oaks still exist in and around the City along watercourses, sharing the riparian corridor with other trees including willow, cottonwood, ash, sycamore and alder. The richness of the Valley Oak forest supports a broad community of wildlife.

Vegetation growing alongside the river and stream systems make up a narrow zone of species which support aquatic animals from water striders and dragonflies to fish and ducks. The presence of water also attracts birds — 65 bird species have been identified along the St. John's River; 40 have been studied in the Mill Creek and Evans Ditch systems.

The State Department of Game and Fish cites that during the past century nearly 95% of California's riparian habitat has been lost, resulting in a significant decrease in the number of associated fish and wildlife. Both the state legislature and the Department of Fish and Game have recognized and are giving priority to maintaining and improving the state's remaining riparian habitat. The Department's policy on riparian habitat is that development projects should not reduce either the quality or quantity of the riparian habitat.

Most of the remaining stands of large, old trees, and much of the undisturbed or revegetated riparian corridors, are found in northeast Visalia, west Visalia, and along the St. John's River. There are areas along all the waterways that flow through the City in which riparian vegetation exists, or could be reintroduced. In places, where creeks and roadways intersect, and along Highway 198 or other major roads, native trees and those planted by civic groups serve as landmarks, creating topographic relief and providing visual interest.

Figure 2 illustrates vegetation and habitat throughout the planning area.

According to habitat surveys (Hansen, 1987) done in conjunction with the West and Northeast Visalia Specific Plans, several sites in Visalia support significant natural habitat and should receive special planning considerations. These sites and other habitat and vegetation types are described as follows:

St. John's River Island west of Cutler Park contains primarily native vegetation species including oaks, willows and blackberries. Because the island has been relatively undisturbed over time, it is a prime example of natural riparian habitat and should be designated as a conservation area.

Ghost Island contains one of the most pristine examples of Valley Oak riparian forest in the City including native trees, understory shrubs, and rich groundcover. This island should be carefully preserved in its natural condition.

Cain St. Cottonwood Grove is a relatively small grove of cottonwoods, contains large trees and other riparian species including wild grape. The area has potential for expansion of the riparian community into adjacent lands.

Modoc Island contains some of the largest Valley Oaks in the City. Careful planning should be taken to protect it from future more intensive area uses.



Mill Creek/Evans Ditch Jungle contains a rich diversity of riparian species and represents an excellent wildlife habitat. Although this site is relatively small (5-10 acres), there are additional lands to the west which could be restored to a natural condition and enhance the overall character of the site.

"Hobo Jungle" located along a small riparian corridor contains a significant number of mature oak trees and native plant species. Previously dependent on a water supply from Jennings Ditch, this area appears to be receding as this water supply has been depleted. Special planning consideration should be given to methods which could help reestablish this site.

A review of the California Natural Diversity Data Base (NDDDB), a computerized inventory of information on the location and condition of rare and threatened plants, animals, and natural communities, indicates the presence of one special animal species and two rare natural communities in the Visalia planning area. The animal species, the Hoppings Blister Beetle, is legally considered a candidate for Federal listing. The natural communities, the Valley Oak riparian forest and the Valley Sacaton Grassland, are protected within the Kaweah Oaks Preserve and are managed through the Nature Conservancy.

The absence of a special animal, plant, or community from the NDDDB listing does not mean that they do not occur in the area, but only that no occurrence data are currently entered in the inventory. Field studies are recommended to implement NDDDB information when determining the impact of specific projects. In the Visalia area, additional field studies are particularly important in regard to the San Joaquin Kit Fox whose dens may be found in atypical areas such as orchards and vacant urban lots. A Kit Fox survey in the West Visalia Specific Plan area (Hansen, 1987) found no Kit Fox in the plan area and indicated that although most of the land in the area is unsuitable as Kit Fox habitat, potential habitat exists in the area around the airport and near the Highway 99/Highway 198 interchange.

The historic range and suitable habitats of other species, including the Blunt-Nosed Leopard Lizard and the Tipton Kangaroo Rat are described in an informal background report prepared for Tulare County's Site Plan Review Committee. The 1988 report indicates that these species are typically found in uncultivated areas and are unlikely to be present within the City or its urban area.

Policies contained in Goal 1 outline methods to preserve and protect habitat, and to protect and enhance the area's significant vegetation, especially mature valley oaks and other trees.

SOILS AND AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Tulare County is one of the most productive agricultural counties in the nation. Almost all of the undeveloped land within the City's planning area is used for farming. This agricultural heritage has created a strong community economic base as well as a valued rural landscape and open space system surrounding the City. However, year after year, the increasing expansion of Visalia and surrounding communities into agricultural lands is taking hundreds of acres of prime soils out of production to accommodate residential, commercial and industrial growth. Economic reasons for converting agricul-



tural land into urban uses has accelerated this conversion process. State-wide concern over this issue led to the adoption of the Williamson Act in 1965, which gives advantageous property tax evaluation to agricultural lands which the owner agrees to maintain in agricultural use for a ten year period.

Numerous landowners within the Visalia planning area have acquired Williamson Act status, ensuring, for the near-term, the economic and open space values of existing agricultural land. In 1976, the City adopted a program which provides agricultural preserve contracts to City property owners whose land is designated as Agricultural on the Land Use Element map (Resolution 1628). As long as agricultural uses continue, Visalia will be surrounded by farmland and separated from nearby towns.

Agricultural land, including land in Williamson Act preserve, is illustrated in Figure 3.

The Urban Boundaries Element of the General Plan delineates the boundary between areas for urban development and an Agricultural Holding Area. The City and County share a common goal of preserving agricultural land and minimizing incompatible land uses.

In the West Visalia Specific Plan adopted in 1988, the relationship between agricultural and urban uses was a key review item. Plan policies recommend City annexation of the plan area to aid in preserving agricultural qualities, and the use of agricultural zoning as an implementation tool for long-term preservation of agricultural uses in the plan area.

The quality of non-agricultural soils is also important to the community. Past industrial operations have contaminated soils in the areas discussed in the Groundwater section.

Goal 2 lists policies related to soils and agricultural resources.





HISTORIC, ARCHAEOLOGICAL, AND AESTHETIC RESOURCES

Historic structures, sites, and visual features reflect the cultural heritage of Visalia. Opportunities for restoration and reuse of architecturally distinct buildings, maintenance of historic land use patterns and neighborhood form, and protection and interpretation of archaeological sites and scenic views are all factors to be considered in cultural heritage planning for the City.

These resources are illustrated in Figure 4.

Visalia has made a commitment to preserve buildings of historic and architectural value by adopting a Historic Preservation Element to the General Plan. A Historic Preservation Advisory Board is responsible for updating and maintaining a local register of historic places, for reviewing development proposals within a designated historic district and for increasing public awareness of the benefits of historic preservation. In 1978, a comprehensive survey of 3,000 structures in the original townsite and early subdivisions was completed.

HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE

An Historic District has been designated in the City. The District, and isolated structures in the vicinity of the district, are located south of the Lincoln Oval area on both sides of Highway 198. A "Craftsmen Addition" proposed for inclusion in the District is located along Noble, Kaweah, and Myrtle Avenues between Conyer and Watson Streets.

The Tulare County Museum and original log cabins located at Mooney Grove Park are listed in the California Inventory of Historic Resources and the National Register of Historic Places. The Historic District is regulated according to Article 26 of the City Zoning Ordinance which provides for regulation of structures and sites.

SCENIC HIGHWAY

The Scenic Highway Element of the City's General Plan discusses issues and policies pertaining to the Highway 198 corridor between Highway 99 in the west and Road 156 in the east. The corridor itself is a result of evolving land uses over the past 75 to 100 years. The agricultural open space which flanks the highway between State Highway 99 and Akers Road is perceived to be a unique element of the community. This "working landscape" is a link with the community's farming heritage. In addition, this corridor provides a transition uncommon to other Highway 99 cities in that it separates western urban areas from more rural areas to the east. This agricultural open space reinforces the City's concentric or balanced growth policies. The West Visalia Specific Plan includes policies for preserving and enhancing the unique scenic qualities of the west Highway 198 entry into Visalia, including landscape guidelines.



ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Native American history is often not visible to a community, because archaeological resources are buried and representatives of former native cultures are scattered. Individual archaeological surveys for specific development projects are a significant source of information about archaeological resources in an area.

Few archaeological investigations have been performed in the Visalia planning area. A records search by the California Archaeological Inventory at California State College, Bakersfield, indicates that three archaeological inventories have been conducted in the area. One site has been located and identified as a Native American campsite.

Potential unrecorded archaeological sites may exist in the planning area, particularly along the undisturbed portions of creeks, and should be considered prior to development. The majority of the Visalia area has been subject to considerable agricultural and urban development and is not likely to yield intact archaeological resources. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires evaluation of any archaeological resources on the site of a development project. Unique resources, as defined by state law, should be protected, either by physical measures or by locating development away from the site.

Historical, Archaeological, and Aesthetic policies are called out in Goal 1.

OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

Examples of the different types and functions of open space in the planning area include the following:

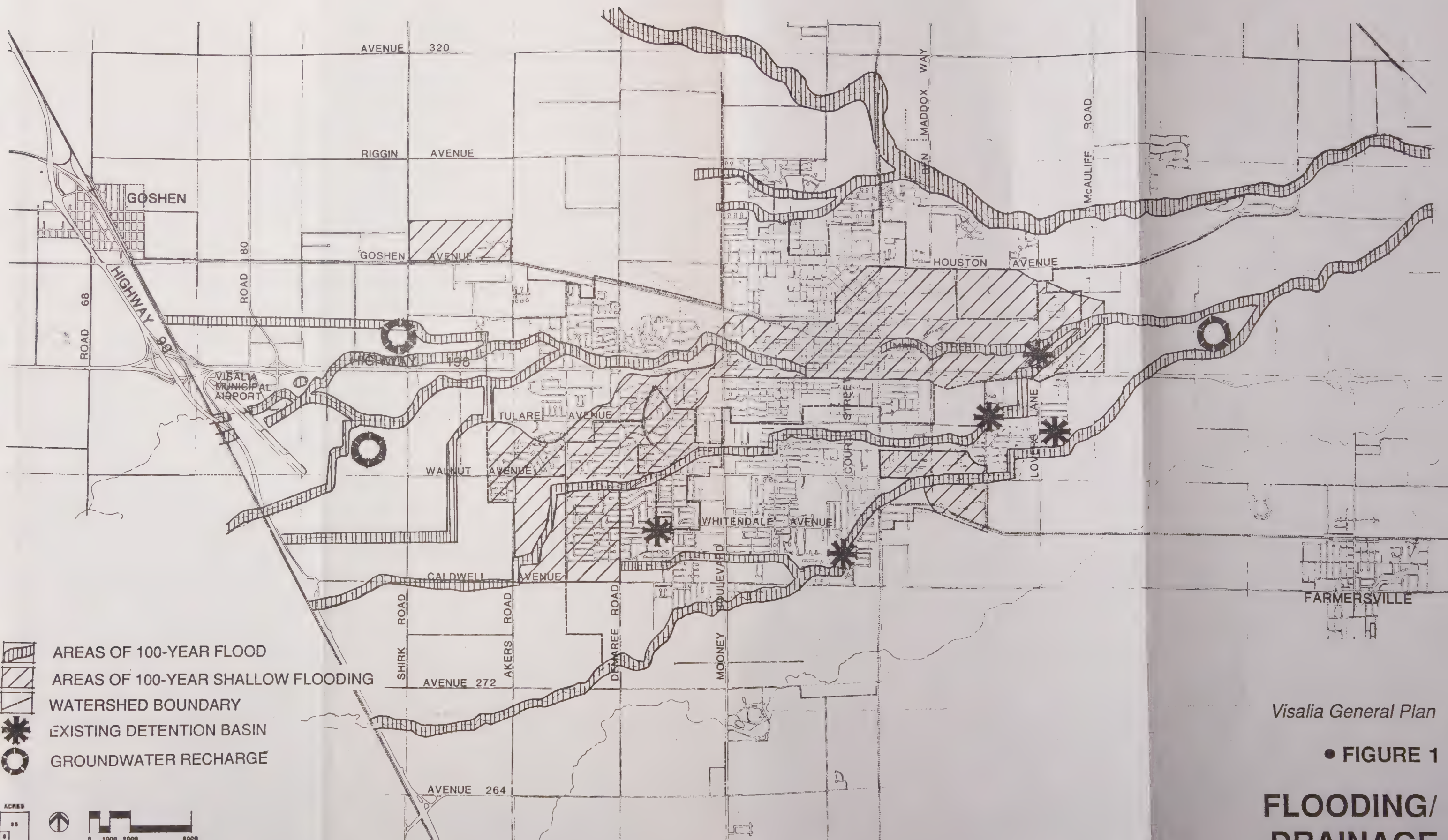
OPEN SPACE FOR PRESERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Community waterways make up a significant portion of untapped open space potential in Visalia. Waterway corridors, river islands, and other open space areas along creek confluences can be maintained as open space to preserve natural habitat for plants and animals. Significant tree groves, including Valley Oak, cottonwood, and other riparian species, provide prime wildlife habitat.

OPEN SPACE FOR MANAGED PRODUCTION OF RESOURCES

Agricultural land in and around the City and areas of prime agricultural soils are the major open space areas to be maintained for resource production.

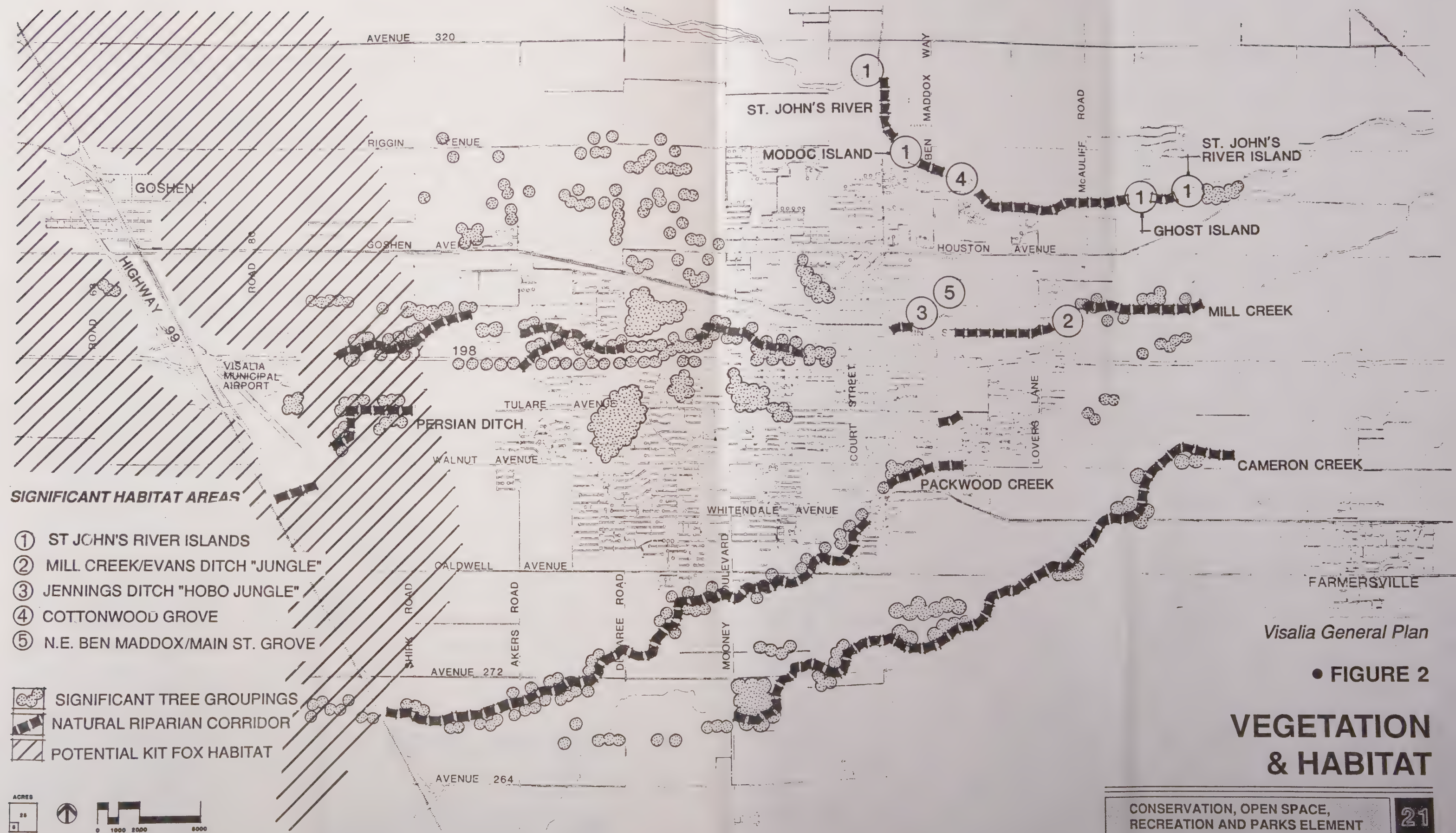


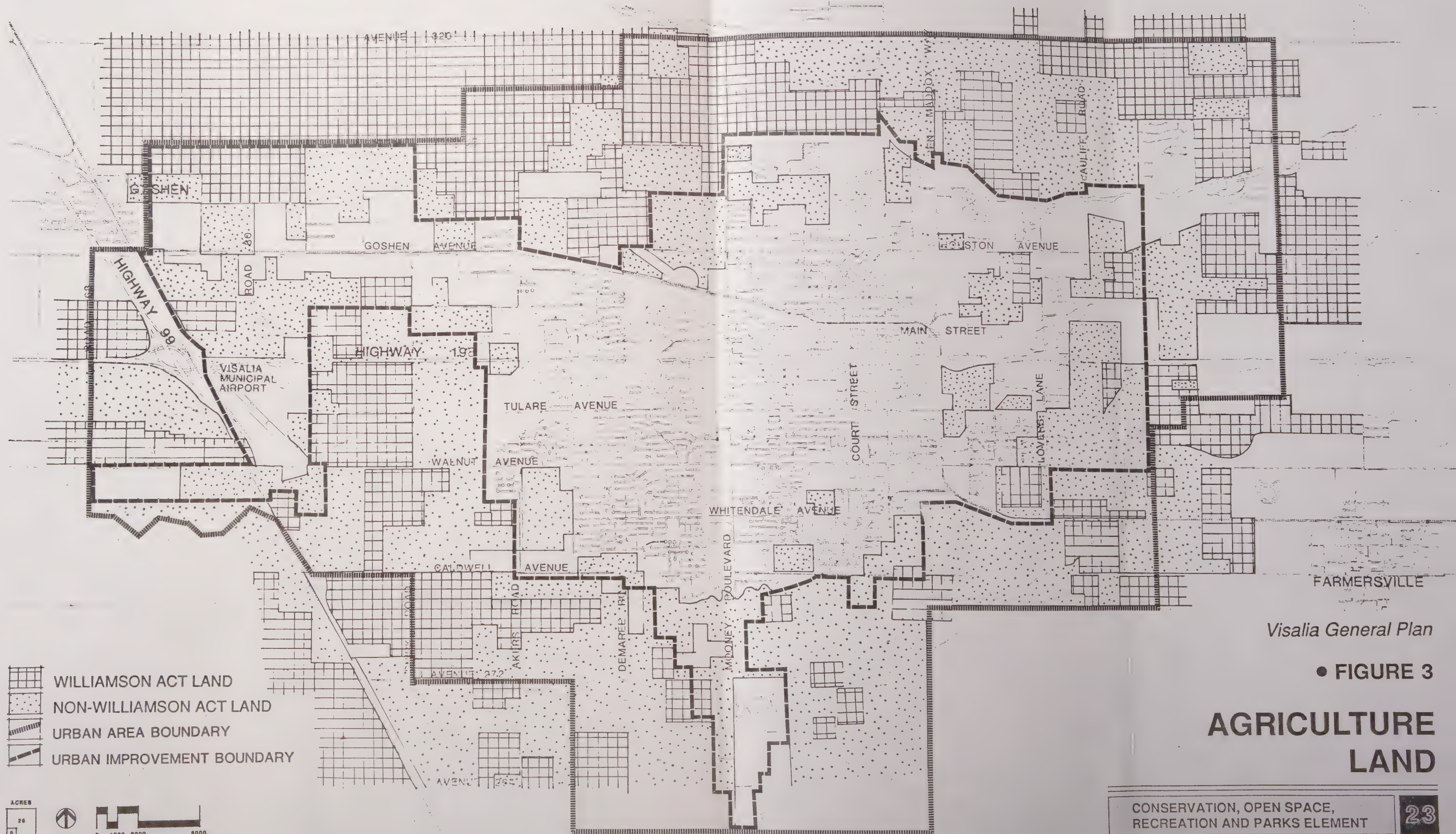


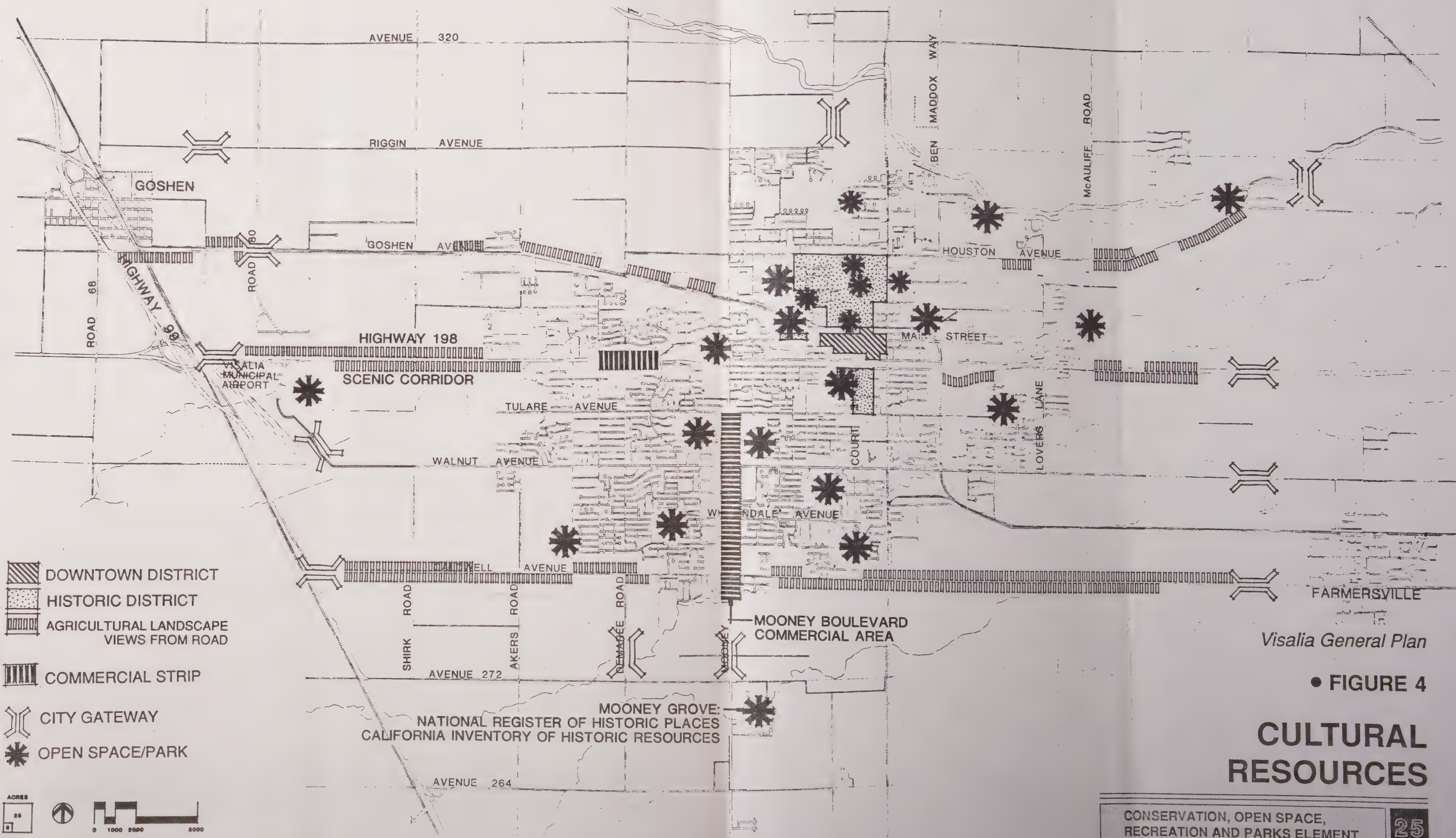
Visalia General Plan

• FIGURE 1

FLOODING/ DRAINAGE











OPEN SPACE FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION

Parks, trails, natural preserves, and bikeways make up this category of open space in the planning area. Community waterways and riparian corridors maintained as open space to preserve natural habitat also serve flood control and irrigation functions. They can also act as links between parks and recreation spaces.

OPEN SPACE FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Visalia Municipal Airport is recognized as having a high degree of compatibility between aviation operations and surrounding land uses. Agricultural open space surrounds much of the airport. A West Visalia Specific Plan policy directs that the airport's long-term viability be preserved by prohibiting the development of incompatible land uses surrounding or in the vicinity of the airport.

The City's wastewater treatment plant is a regional facility surrounded by agricultural open space located west of Highway 99.

Goal 3 outlines open space policies to minimize public health and land use conflicts with the treatment plant and the airport.

PARK AND RECREATION PROGRAMS

The 1980 Conservation, Open Space, Parks and Recreation Element set goals and standards for open space and recreational facilities. An acquisition and development program for 1990 targeted additional parkland acreage to be provided in City, school and privately-owned sites. The 1980 Element specified an open space- to-population ratio of 7.6 acres per 1,000 persons to gauge acquisition and development progress. This ratio was further broken down by provider: 4 acres/1,000 for City-owned land, 3 acres/1,000 for school sites, and 0.5 acres/1,000 for private open space. The City's 4 acres/1000 residents standards focused on mini, neighborhood and community parks. During the 1980s, the City's Leisure and Community Services Department developed and upgraded many park and recreation facilities, as shown in Table 1.

In 1987, the City's Quimby Fee program was converted to a Park Acquisition and Development Fee program. Quimby fees were applied to 20 small neighborhood areas in which residential development occurred. These fees were assessed in one lump sum at the time a parcel map or subdivision map was approved. The Park Acquisition and Development Fee Ordinance consolidated the City's 20 neighborhoods into four quadrants. State Highway 198 and Mooney Boulevard are the dividing lines for these four neighborhood quadrants. Land and fees received under this Ordinance provide park and recreation facilities serving the neighborhood quadrant in which the contributing residential development occurs. Acquisition fees are collected for each new lot within a subdivision when a map is approved. Development fees are paid with the issuance of building permits. One quarter of all fees collected are grouped in a separate fifth fund for community-wide recreation facilities.

(Continued on page 30.)



TABLE 1

**PARK AND RECREATION
PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

1981

Plaza Air Park Master Plan
1980 Conservation, Open Space, Recreation
and Park Element
Whitendale Park Phase 1
Ice House Park
Jefferson Park upgrade
Rotary Park fitness course

1982

Plaza Park restroom and concession facility
Plaza Park Ballfield #4
Blain Park
Memorial Park
Visalia Oaks Single A professional baseball operation added
Golf course operations added
Convention Center Theatre complex operation added

1983

Plaza maintenance operation added
Village Park
Redwood Community Pool

1984

Whitendale Community Center
St. John's Community Pool
Plaza Park golf facilities relocated
Valley Oaks clubhouse and pro shop
Houk Park upgraded
Park and facility naming policy revised
City park concession guidelines

1985

Plaza Park ballfield & arena parking
Recreation Park pool removed
St. John's River Park - Phase 1 initiated
Plaza Park and Arena upgrade
(fencing, irrigation, landscaping, etc.)

1987

Crowley ballfield lighting upgrade
Whitendale & Plaza Park picnic shelters
Conservation, Open Space, Recreation and
Park Element update initiated



TABLE 1 - Continued

1987 (continued)

Park Acquisition and Development Fee Ordinance
20 concrete picnic tables for City parks
Bond Act money for Senior Center and
Recreation Park upgrade
Visalia Oaks new concession, restrooms and
stadium improvements
Mill Creek Garden Park - Phase 1
7.5 acre land donation from James Coopman
Community-wide garden project at Willow Glen Park
site for Southeast Asian population

1988

Updated Capital Improvement Plan for
park improvement and development projects
Draft St. John's River Park Master Plan
Community-wide creek and ditch study
Pinkham Park

(Continued from page 28.)

The Ordinance also introduced fee credits to mitigate for dedicated park land and improvements, private open space, usable area in storm drainage ponding basins, and affordable housing.

CITY PARK SPACE

With 20 parks totalling approximately 128 acres, the City is the largest provider of recreational services in the planning area. Over the past, parks have been labeled in a variety of ways (i.e., vestpocket, playfields, parkways, community-park school, etc.). Policies in this Element refer to five types of City-owned park and open spaces:

- Mini-parks (less than 2 acres in size)
- Neighborhood parks (2-10 acres)
- Community parks (10-100 acres)
- Regional parks (100+ acres)
- Linear spaces (varies)

Table 2 summarizes facilities available at City parks.

Figure 5 illustrates existing City parks and indicates their services areas. The community profiles contained in Appendix A show the location of parks in each of the neighborhoods, along with other recreational and cultural facilities.



TABLE 2
EXISTING CITY
PARK FACILITIES

	ACRES	PLAY AREA	PICNIC TABLES	RESTROOMS	PLAY EQUIPMENT	SOFTBALL	BASKETBALL	FOOTBALL/SOCCER	VOLLEYBALL	TENNIS	DRINKING FOUNTAIN	ON-SITE PARKING	BENCHES	BBQ
MINI-PARKS														
LINCOLN OVAL	1.8	X	X	4									1	
MEMORIAL	1.0	X									X			1
VILLAGE	.75	X		1	X		1						1	1
MAYOR'S	0.6	X		1										
NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS														
MILL CREEK GARDEN	8.0	X		2							1	X		
BLAIN	8.0	X	X	28	X				2			X	2	7
WEST MAIN	5.0	X		4									1	
LINWOOD	4.8	X		4	X	1						X		
SUMMERS	3.7	X		4	X		1	2					1	2
JEFFERSON	3.5	X	X	3	X	1	1		1	1			1	2
PINKHAM	2.6	X		2	X				1				1	2
ROTARY	2.5	X	X	3	X								1	1
SOROPTIMIST	2.5	X	X	1	X		1						1	1
HOUK	2.4	X	X	10	X				1				1	2
ICE HOUSE	2.0	X		2								X		
CRESTWOOD	2.0	X		2	X									1
COMMUNITY PARKS														
RECREATION	14	X	X	26	X	1	2		3	3			1	6
WHITENDALE	10	X	X	20	X	4				2	X			3
REGIONAL PARKS														
*PLAZA	45	X	X	82	X	4			8	3	2	X	3	9
ST. JOHN'S RIVER	7.5													

*Area does not include 155 acres for golf facilities.



CITY SPECIAL USE CULTURAL/ RECREATIONAL AREAS AND FACILITIES

In addition to park and open spaces, the City's Leisure and Community Services staff operates a number of recreational, social and cultural facilities to serve the community.

These special use recreational areas and facilities as well as other community resources are listed in Table 3.

TABLE 3

SPECIAL USE CULTURAL/RECREATION FACILITIES

Jurisdiction	Facility
Tulare County	House of Volunteers Tulare County Public Library Whitendale Community Center (Housing Authority)
City/County	East Library Wing
City	Plaza Park Senior Citizens Center Valley Oaks Golf Course Clubhouse Plaza Park Arena Recreation Park Stadium Fairview Center Recreation Center Creative Center Ice House Theatre
City/Visalia Unified School District	Redwood HS Community Pool St. John's Community Pool Visalia Community and Convention Center L.J. Williams Theatre Rotary Theatre
Visalia Unified School District	Mt. Whitney HS Pool
City/College of the Sequoias/VUSD	Mineral King Bowl
City/Private	Bill Wittman Village Center
Private	Special Services Field Office



TRAILS AND BIKEWAYS

Visalia's terrain and dry climate make an ideal community for bike riding. The 1980 Element stated the need for a bicycle trail system. An objective of this update is to outline a feasible and safe trail and bike system along City streets and selected waterways.

Figure 8 illustrates concepts for a city trail system.

In 1980, a Citizens Bicycle Committee developed a Draft Bicycle Plan. This draft was never formally adopted. Generally, the draft plan emphasized safety; route continuity; location criteria based on travel considerations, traffic factors and route geometrics; and support facilities. Since that time, the City has striped several segments of arterial and collector streets for bike routes. With the exception of a segment along the St. John's River between Cain and Buena Vista Streets, no separate bikeways exist in the City.

The creeks and ditches of Visalia are potential features along which trails for walking and bicycling could be developed. In outlying areas, equestrian trails could also be developed along creeks. Other potential alignments for trails include utility line corridors and railroad rights-of-way.

Many of the objective and policy statements contained in Goal 2 are based on the Citizens Bicycle Committee's draft plan and emphasize creating a bikeway loop linking Cutler Park and Plaza Park (see Figure 7).

CITY SPONSORED RECREATION PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

The City's Leisure and Community Services Department supervises and coordinates a wide variety of programs and activities. These include:

Community Center and Neighborhood Programs. Recreational, social and cultural programs and services are provided, including summer day camps and youth and adult programs at three community centers (Recreation, North Visalia, and Whitendale). Programs for the City's Southeast Asian population, fine art classes and workshops for youth, and co-sponsorship with local art agencies of technical assistance workshops for practicing artists and art organizations. In the future, two issues will require changes in the type and format of programs offered. The change to year-round schools, and the increasing Laotian population will both affect the operation of neighborhood programs, requiring staffing changes, and a strengthened emphasis on cooperation between cultures.

Sports and Aquatics. The Department's Recreation Division provides organized men's and women's sports leagues and youth sports leagues as well as an aquatics program. The Department emphasizes participant involvement in the planning, organization, and implementation of these programs. As participation increases, however, future trends indicate that there will be a need for additional fields and facilities for sports programs, that existing facilities will need major and minor renovation, that staffing and funding demand will increase, and that the Recreation Division will take a major role in working with non-profit groups providing sports programs.



Volunteer Programs. Meaningful community volunteer opportunities are available, including the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) with an average of 350 volunteers, and Visalia Voluntary Action Program with an average of 400 volunteers. In 1987, it was estimated that over 250,000 volunteer hours were dedicated to community programs. The Department also provides coordination of the City's appointed advisory boards and commissions. The number of residents over 60 years of age will increase in the future, raising demand for services such as RSVP, but also increasing the number of seniors with technical and professional skills available through non-profit agencies and community programs. Volunteers of all ages will be needed to augment increased community services.

Senior Programs. Recreational, educational, nutritional and social programs are provided, including a meals program that served over 40,000 meals in 1987, home improvement and repair services to low income seniors, subsidized yard care service to low income and frail elderly, and presentations to local schools to increase awareness of issues associated with the senior citizen population. An increase in the number of frail elderly residents in need of in-home and day care services will affect departmental programs. The existing senior center will be used more, and demand for meals is expected to increase by 50% over the next five years.

Special Populations Program. The Special Populations Division coordinates programs for physically or developmentally handicapped citizens of Tulare County. The program, initiated in 1986, offers services not available elsewhere, including monthly field trips, exercise classes, and day camps and also seeks to integrate handicapped participants into non-specialized recreation activities and programs in the community.

Community park and recreation facilities such as the Whitendale Community Center, designed with the needs of the handicapped in mind, provide space for these programs. While the goal of the program is not to segregate handicapped recreation participants from other segments of the community, a specially designed space is needed for activities such as wheelchair-accessible cooking classes and other innovative programs.

Community Events. The Department helps sponsor family-oriented and special community events throughout the year, including 4th of July celebrations, Street Faire, Concerts in the Park, Christmas Candy Lane Parade, and Cyclorion.

Recreation program and facilities policies are listed in Goal 4.

CULTURAL ARTS RESOURCES

The City's Leisure and Community Services' Convention Center and Theater Division plans and coordinates a wide variety of cultural arts programs and facility development projects. Since 1984, over 1,000 cultural and performing art events have been coordinated at City, school and other facilities.

The Visalia Convention Center includes an Exhibit Hall which accommodates performing art and special events, conference areas, and catered events requiring kitchen facilities. A 200-room hotel and convention center expansion are planned for 1990.



The L.J. Williams Theatre seats 1,277. It includes a kitchen and reception areas, and is equipped with closed circuit TV for non-televised public events.

The Ice House Theatre is housed in a 1921 ice house and soda works building. It provides an intimate environment for amateur company productions.

The Rotary Theater is an Art Deco-style performing arts center. It seats 328 and hosts local cultural events including high school drama and musical productions, dance recitals, and concerts.

The Convention Center and Theatre Division staffs the Entertainment and Cultural Arts Commission. The Commission is appointed by the City Council to facilitate growth in the number of cultural opportunities available to area residents. The Commission has been responsible for attracting nationally-recognized entertainers. It also sponsors local cultural activities through its seed grant and venture capital programs. Over the past years, these programs have partially funded projects such as the Cinco de Mayo Celebration, Tulare County Symphony productions, COS Multi-Cultural Fair, Ashland Shakespeare Workshops and the September 16th Celebration. In all, over 75 events have been sponsored by the Commission since 1984.

Cultural resources and arts policies are listed in Goal 4.

COUNTY REGIONAL PARK AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Two county parks are within Visalia's planning area. Mooney Grove Park, 140 acres, and Cutler Park, 50 acres, are regional parks which attract people from the entire planning area as well as Tulare and Kings Counties. These parks accommodate important recreation and historical resources. They also contain unique examples of Valley Oak forest and riparian vegetation which once flourished in the area.

Regional park policies are listed in Goal 3.

JOINT USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

In addition to City-owned park space and recreational facilities, Visalia residents have access to grounds and playing fields at Visalia Unified School District (VUSD) schools and the College of the Sequoias (COS).

Table 4 summarizes sports facilities at city schools. VUSD and the City have established an outstanding cooperative relationship encouraging maximum use of public property, facilities and equipment for the community. Examples of this successful joint venture program include:

Land Acquisition and Development. VUSD acquisition of additional land adjacent to school sites and City development of park spaces, a joint powers agreement for acquiring property and facilities including the Convention Center, Exhibit Hall, Schools Administration Offices and the L.J. Williams Theatre.



Educational and Recreation Programs. Joint use agreements (direct cost for use) are utilized for facilities such as high school gyms, VUSD use of Plaza Park golf and tennis facilities and for modernization of the Mineral King Bowl through the combined efforts of COS, VUSD and the City.

Policies related to maintaining the City's strong relationship with the school district are listed in Goal 3.

TABLE 4

EXISTING SCHOOL RECREATION FACILITIES

TABLE 4 EXISTING SCHOOL RECREATION FACILITIES		BASKETBALL-OUTDOOR SWINGS												FOOTBALL-SOCCER		PLAY EQUIPMENT		PICNIC TABLES		BASKETBALL-COURT GAMES		BASKETBALL-INDOOR		TENNIS		POOL		TRACK		HANDBALL		VOLLEYBALL	
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS																																	
	FAIRVIEW	X	5	6	2	X	X		X																						4		
	CROWLEY	X	3	3	1	X	X		X																						1		
	HOUSTON	X	5	3	3	X	X		X																								
	HIGHLAND	X	1		1		X																										
	WILLOW GLEN	X	3	4	2	X	X		X																								
	VEVA BLUNT	X	3	4	2	X	X		X																								
	ROYAL OAKS	X	4	5	2		X		X																								
	CONYER	X	3	2	2		X																										
	WASHINGTON	X	1	3	1		X		X																						2		
	MINERAL KING	X	2	10	2		X		X																						4		
	MT. VIEW	X	4	4	2	X	X		X																								
	CRESTWOOD	X	6	2	2	X	X		X																						2		
	LINWOOD	X	3	2	3	X	X		X																						2		
	GOLDEN OAK	X	2	3	3		X		X																								
JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS																																	
	GREEN ACRES		3	7	3	X		2																							8		
	VALLEY OAK		4	10	3		2	2																							4		
	DIVISADERO		4	9	2	X		2																							9		
HIGH SCHOOLS																																	
	GOLDEN WEST		2	4	3	X		2		1	8	1	1																				
	MT. WHITNEY		2	4	2	X		3		1	10	1	1	2	2																		
	REDWOOD			3	3	X		2		1	9	1	1	2																			
COLLEGE																																	
COLLEGE OF THE SEQUOIAS			1		1	X		2		1	8	1	1	4																			



**OTHER AREA OPEN SPACE
AND RECREATION FACILITIES**

There are several other commercial and private open space and recreational facilities in and around Visalia:

Sierra View Golf Course - a public 18-hole course south of the City.

Visalia Country Club - an 18-hole course open only to members and guests.

Visalia Community YMCA - the local "Y" provides extensive year-round programs of leisure activities and services. Major programs include youth and adult fitness, day care, cultural classes, sports camps for golf, baseball, basketball and volleyball, and outdoor summer camp. Facilities include a gym, locker rooms, fitness areas, weight rooms and competitive skateboarding facility.

Special Interest Organizations - The Visalia area contains a large number of special interest open space and recreational groups. Organizations include the Sierra Club, Audubon Society, model airplaners, youth sports, etc.

Goals 3 and 4 contain policies involving area recreational and special user groups.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

**SPACE, DEVELOPMENT
AND PROGRAM STANDARDS**

Traditional approaches to recreation planning have used quantitative measures of land, facilities and programs to evaluate the adequacy of sites and features. These measures or standards are expressed in acres of park land per 1000 residents, numbers of playfields per 100 school children, or the percentage of total acreage that exists in open space. Such methods quantify park resources and recreation facilities, and provide a general guide for communities to measure park and recreation resources. Developing these standards requires specific consideration of factors including local conditions and expressed needs of users.

In this needs analysis, a series of factors has been considered. Starting with broad national standards suggested for park and recreation facilities (see Appendix B), refinements were made based on local factors pertaining to Visalia. In addition, the needs of the public as expressed through interviews, City surveys and public meetings and hearings were reviewed and considered in forming the recommendations. The mix of City and school recreation facilities and the levels of demand for particular activities were also analyzed.

EXISTING PARK LAND

Visalia uses a standard based on acres/1000 residents.

Table 5 summarizes the City's existing park acreage to population ratio.

**TABLE 5****EXISTING CITY PARK ACRES TO POPULATION RATIOS**

1988 Population Estimate 65,215	Park Acreage	Acres/ 1,000 Residents	Meets Existing Standards (4 ac/1000)
------------------------------------	-----------------	---------------------------	--

Mini Neighborhood & Community Parks	75	1.1/1000	No
---	----	----------	----

City-wide parks including, Plaza Park* and St. John's River Park**	127.5	1.9/1000	No
---	-------	----------	----

*Plaza Park's 155 acre golf course is not included in area calculations.

**St. John's River Park includes both land and river bottom area (total 7.5 acres).

In comparison with national standards, Visalia is below average in neighborhood, community, and regional park acreage. Adding Tulare County's regional facilities at Cutler and Mooney Grove parks raises the ratio of park land to City residents to 6.5 acres/1000.

The current ratio of park land to residents is shown below for the four neighborhood quadrants:

TABLE 6**EXISTING CITY NEIGHBORHOOD QUADRANT PARK ACRES TO POPULATION**

Neighborhood Quadrant	Park Acreage (City Only)*	Acres/1,000 Residents
--------------------------	------------------------------	--------------------------

1. Northeast 1988 pop. 17,980	34	1.9/1000
----------------------------------	----	----------

2. Southeast 1988 pop. 22,020	27	1.2/1000
----------------------------------	----	----------

3. Southwest 1988 pop. 21,715	9	0.4/1000
----------------------------------	---	----------

4. Northwest 1988 pop. 3,500	5	1.4/1000
---------------------------------	---	----------

*Does not include regional parks - Plaza Park or St. John's River Park.



Table 6 above indicates that City park space alone is not adequate to provide the standard 4.0 acres/1000 residents for any of the four neighborhoods. In addition, the majority of Visalia's new parks will be classified as park/ponds, combining recreation areas and passive open space with temporary stormwater storage areas.

PROJECTED FUTURE GROWTH

According to City population projections, 34,000 new residents are projected by the year 2000. Based upon recently completed residential projects and for projects pending approval, the pattern of residential growth appears to be growing outwardly in almost all directions. The focus of this future growth appears to be where large blocks of land are available in the southeast and northwest quadrants of the City.

The ability to forecast growth allows for planning in acquiring and developing parks in advance of development. Visalia has seen a relatively strong, steady growth in its population since the 1960's. The 1988 city population of approximately 65,215 is nearly four times the 1960 population of 15,800. Future growth is projected to remain steady at a level of approximately 3.5 percent per year.

Table 7 indicates City park land to be acquired to reach and maintain the City's 4.0 acres/1000 residents standard with the 3.5 percent growth rate.

TABLE 7		
PROJECTED CITY PARK NEEDS BY POPULATION GROWTH		
Year	Projected City Population	Total Park Acreage Needed to Reach 4.0/1,000 Standard
1990	70,300	281 ac.
1995	83,500	333 ac.
2000	99,200	396 ac.
2010	139,900	560 ac.
2020	197,300	790 ac.

Table 7 figures indicate only the park acreage to be acquired to meet existing standards. Improvements and facilities must also be planned, developed and maintained to ensure adequate recreation opportunities for existing and future residents.

EXISTING AND FUTURE FACILITIES

The City's park system is supplemented by visual open space provided by the community's rural setting. In addition, the City's proximity to the Sierras provides numerous recreational opportunities for segments of Visalia's population. These location factors as well as the needs associated with other segments of the population, combine to create a unique set of priorities to include into the analysis of recreation and associated facilities in Visalia.



Through public surveys, particularly the Leisure Needs Assessment Survey (July 1984), and a shorter version updating that survey done in the fall of 1987, issues have been raised which will help refine general (National) standards to a level that expresses the unique nature of Visalia's park and recreation needs.

These surveys indicated an interest in having access to safe, clean, and well maintained City parks, and a need for programs and facilities including swimming, youth sports, biking, and musical performances. The 1984 survey recommended that program standards be adopted to meet the expressed needs of the community. Interviews and input at public meetings stressed the importance of adequate sites for youth soccer, league softball, and golf.

Standards (based on facility or improvement per 1000 residents) for Visalia have been developed and are listed in Table 8. Table 8 also outlines existing facilities available through the city, Visalia Unified School District, Tulare County and private sources. Facilities needs based on the Visalia standards are also indicated for the years 1995 and 2000.

FUTURE PARK DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

The City's proposed park improvement and development projects for the next 12 years are summarized in the Implementation chapter. This list is based on the City's Capital Improvement Program. In total, 130 acres of new parks are proposed in the next five years (to 1994), and an additional 185 acres are proposed to be acquired and developed during 1995-2000.

These parks are grouped by the City's neighborhood quadrants as shown in Table 9:

TABLE 9

PROJECTED CITY PARK ACQUISITION BY NEIGHBORHOOD QUADRANT

	1989-1994	1995-2000
1. Northeast Quadrant	49.5 ac.	31.5 ac.
2. Southeast Quadrant	19.0 ac.	48.0 ac.
3. Southwest Quadrant	58.5 ac.	36.0 ac.
4. Northwest Quadrant	4.0 ac.	70.0 ac.
	131.0 ac.	185.5 ac.
Total	315.5 ac.	
Regional park Acquisition (St. John's river Park, Phases 2 & 3)	70 ac.	30 ac.

TABLE 8

RECREATION FACILITIES - EXISTING VISALIA FACILITY STANDARDS AND PROJECTED NEEDS

NOTE: The quality of the existing facilities varies greatly (i.e. competitive to sandlot).

		BASKETBALL		HANDBALL		FOOTBALL/SOCCER		BASEBALL		SOFTBALL		VOLLEYBALL		INDOOR SWIMMING		ICE HOCKEY		TENNIS		COMMUNITY CENTER		GOLF COURSE		NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER		ARENA		IN-DOOR SWIMMING		SHOOTING RANGE		PUBLIC STADIUM		AUDITORIUM		PLAYFIELD		ARCHERY		TRACK	
VISALIA STANDARDS	*POPULATION	3 K	6 K	2 K	20 K	1 K	5 K	2 K	100 K	20 K	20 K	25 K	50 K	10 K	10 K	20 K	50 K	50 K	20 K	100 K	0.8 K	50 K	20 K																		
	FACILITY (NO.)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1																		
BASED ON CURRENT POPULATION (65,215) VISALIA'S NEEDS ARE:		22	11	33	3	66	13	33	0.6	3	3	3	1	7	7	3	1	1	3	0.6	82	1	3																		
EXISTING FACILITIES:	COUNTY							2													10																				
	CITY	11	15	7		6	9	10			1	4	1	1	1	2	1				20																				
	SCHOOL	61	2	44	16	90	38	35		4				4					3		54	2	4																		
	PRIVATE							16			2			1					1	2																					
	TOTAL	72	18	51	16	96	47	63	0	4	3	4	1	6	1	2	1	0	4	2	84	2	4																		
TOTAL 1988 +, - OR = (ABOVE OR BELOW STANDARD)		+50	+7	+18	+16	+30	+34	+30		+1	=	+1	=	-1	-6	-1	=	-1	+1	+1	+2	+1	+1																		
TOTAL NEEDED IN 1995 (BASED ON 83,470 POPULATION)		28	14	42	4	83	17	42	0.8	4	4	3	1.7	8	8	4	1.7	2	4	0.8	104	1.7	4																		
TOTAL NEEDED IN 2000 (BASED ON 99,140 POPULATION)		33	17	50	5	90	20	50	2	5	5	4	2	10	10	5	2	2	5	1	124	2	5																		

*In the population figures, each "K" represents 1,000.





This projected acquisition program will not meet the 396 acres cited in Table 7 to attain the 4.0/1000 standard by the year 2000. In addition, development of parks and recreation facilities could be delayed because of funding constraints. This projection emphasizes the fact that the City cannot be the sole provider of parks and recreation facilities within the community.

Table 8 reinforces that most of the City's outdoor playfields have been provided on VUSD facilities rather than in City parks. This City/VUSD relationship has worked extremely well, and future needs cited in the Table dictate that the City foster this partnership with the schools. However, as VUSD school sites diminish in size due to budget constraints, the City must act as a facilitator to insure needs are met. The table also indicates a need for special user groups (youth soccer, softball leagues, golfers) to participate in the acquisition, development, and maintenance of facilities.

The need for additional regional parkland is clear. The City will have to develop new sources of funding and initiate cooperative agreements with the County and with other agencies to acquire new regional park sites. Long-range objectives for the City regarding regional park sites include the integration of Cutler Park with the St. John's River Park; the acquisition of a regional park in the southeast quadrant, perhaps in conjunction with a public golf course and improvements along Cameron Creek; the expansion of Plaza Park and protection of open space surrounding the airport and wastewater treatment plant; investigation of a water-oriented site at the Modoc sink basin on Riggin Avenue; and development of a heritage farm park at the junction of Demaree Road and the St. John's River.

The adequacy of recreation, cultural, and leisure programs depends on factors including availability and accessibility of facilities, demand for specific programs, and the extent to which demand is met by other public or private agencies. According to the Leisure and Community Services Department staff, the future needs of residents will most likely focus on additional programs for seniors and the frail elderly, for continued support for social service programs, for more City-sponsored adult and youth sports leagues, and for additional learning and performing opportunities in the arts.

SUMMARY

The following issues are addressed in the Element Goals, Objectives, and Policies section.

Acquisition of Park Land. Projected City park improvement and development projects indicate a marginal supply of park land based on City standards through 2000, the distribution of parks among neighborhoods may not keep pace with population growth. The focus on acquiring park land prior to development should be in the northwest and southeast neighborhoods.

Long-term Planning. Acquiring regional park sites or developing special facilities such as a water park require a series of actions, beginning with cost estimates and project feasibility studies. Budgeting for these items should

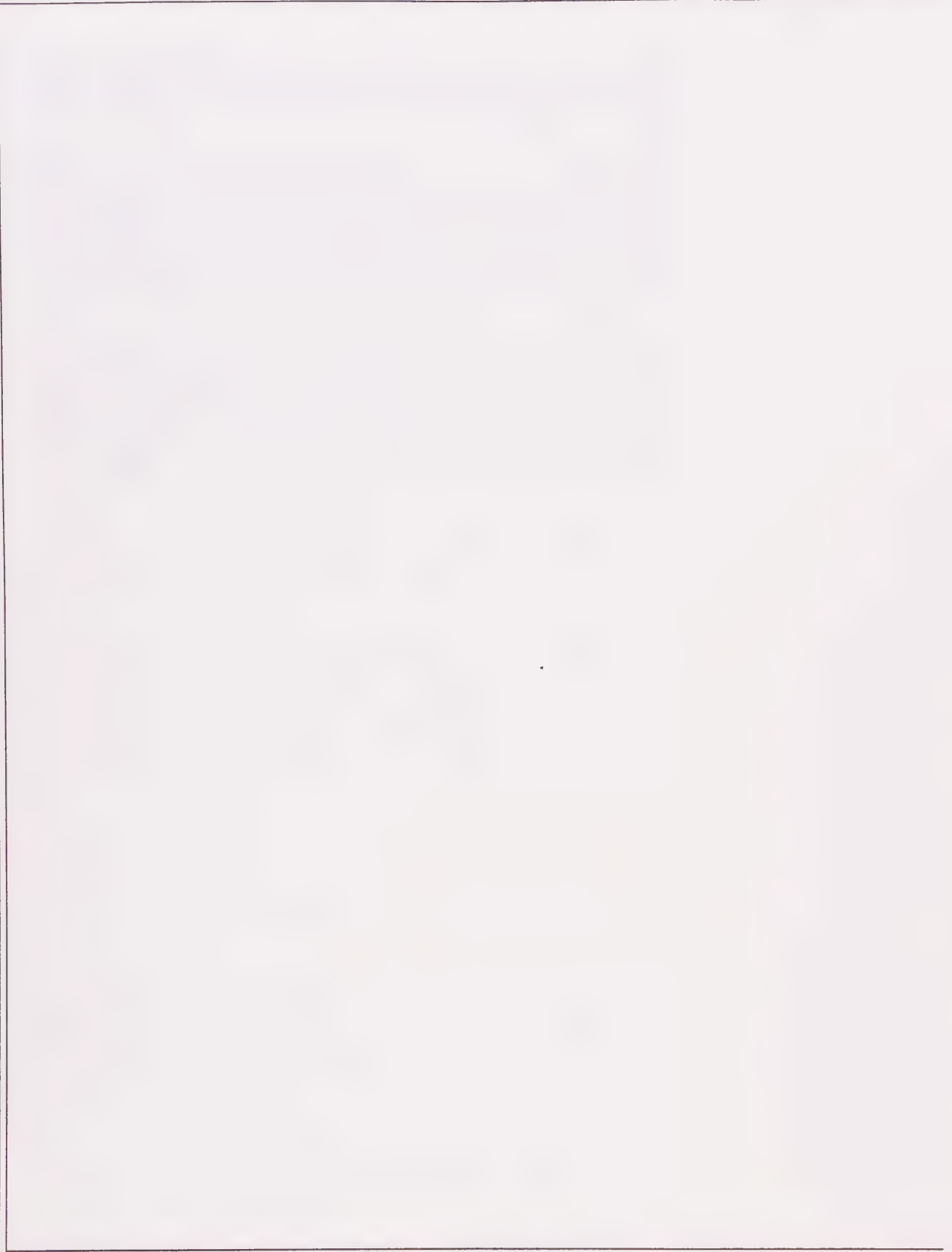
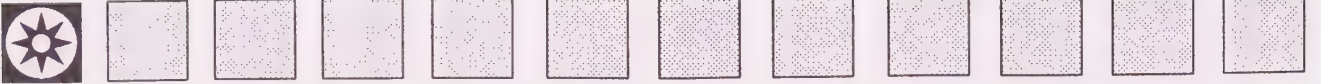


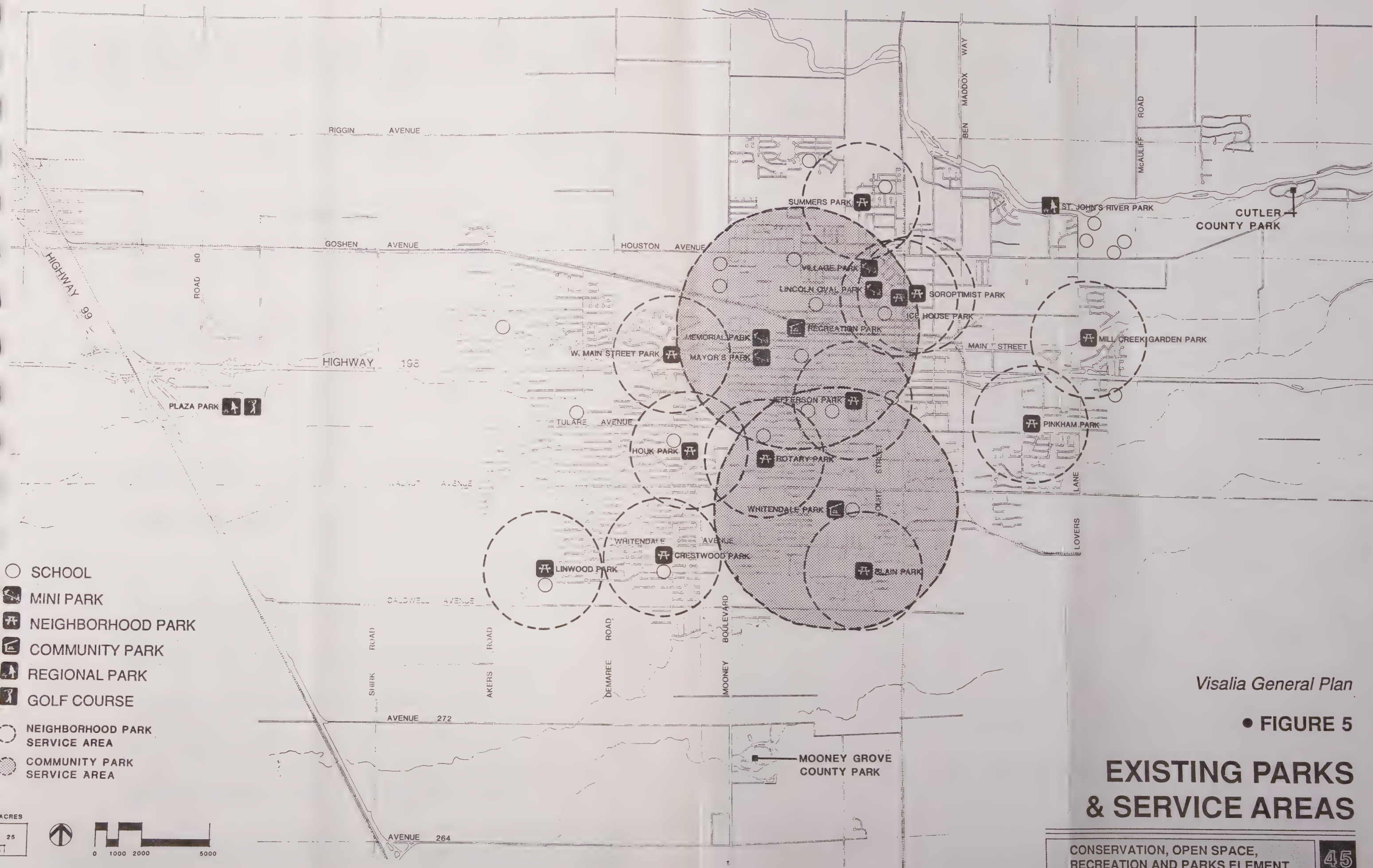
occur in the short-term, in order to make long-term acquisition and development possible. Public-private joint ventures must be encouraged for regional park development.

Programming Needs. A coordinated approach to assessing user needs through surveys and needs analyses should be a priority for the Leisure Services Department and should be funded as soon as possible. Visalia's unique set of community values and citizen interests will change over time, and regular monitoring of user preferences, satisfaction with existing programs, and desires for new programs will ensure that the variety and adequacy of program offerings which exists now will continue.

Public/Private Cooperation. The expressed need for more sports facilities to accommodate soccer and softball interest should be met through a combination of public and private ventures. Joint planning for new school sites and community parks should include opportunities for involvement by private groups who may be able to provide support in the acquisition, maintenance, and management of community sports fields.







Visalia General Plan

• FIGURE 5

EXISTING PARKS & SERVICE AREAS

CONSERVATION, OPEN SPACE,
RECREATION AND PARKS ELEMENT



GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & POLICIES

This chapter presents goals for future City accomplishments in conservation, open space, recreation and parks areas. Objectives, policies, and standards to be used in meeting these goals are grouped in subjects under each goal, relating to particular resources, facilities or programs. The purpose of the goals, objectives, and policies is to provide guidelines by which to consider public and private development proposals, to help in determining future capital improvement and services budgets, and to provide a roadmap for future City growth.

Conserve, restore, and enhance significant natural, cultural and historical resources to sustain the Visalia planning area's environmental quality.

GOAL 1

1.1 WATER QUALITY AND CONSERVATION

Objectives

Provide for long-range community water needs and protect water quality and quantity. A

Optimize the use and conservation of the community's surface and groundwater resources. B

Implementing Policies

Develop a public information program for citizens on water conservation, including low-flow plumbing techniques and suggested drought-tolerant landscape species and planting and irrigation methods. 1.1.1

Require all new private and public development projects to use water conserving plumbing fixtures, landscaping and irrigation systems. 1.1.2

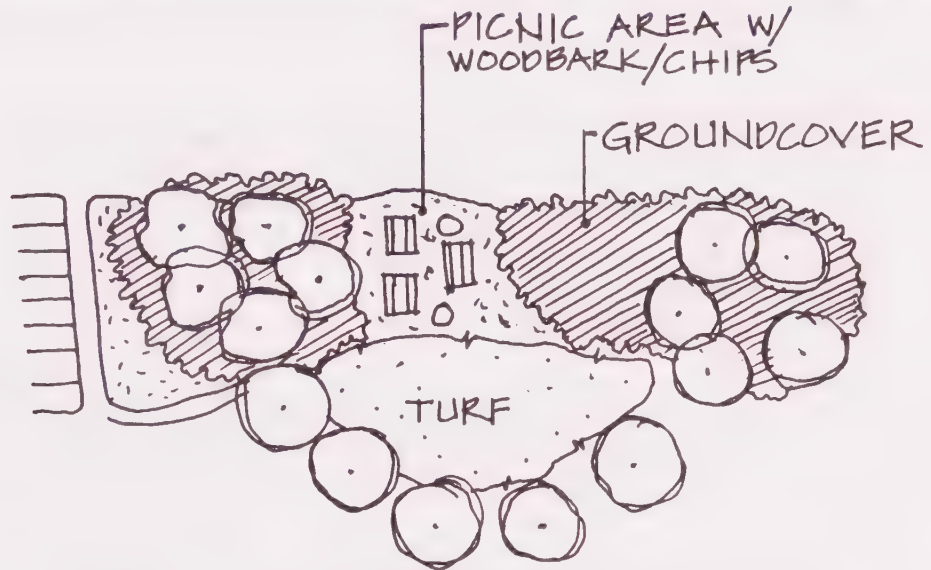
Develop water conservation gardens as demonstration projects for a future neighborhood park (or rehabilitation of an older park) in each of the City's four neighborhood quadrants. 1.1.3

Require the use of drought tolerant turf grasses and expand the use of tensiometers in existing and future City parks. 1.1.4

Establish design criteria for parks to encourage drought tolerant groundcovers in access, picnic and service-related areas and to cluster grass play areas in compact, conveniently located spaces. 1.1.5



- 1.1.6 Require the planting of drought-tolerant trees, shrubs and groundcovers emphasizing native species in City park and open spaces.



Drought Tolerant Groundcovers

Acacia redolens
Artemesia caucasia - Silver spreader
Atriplex semibaccata - Australian saltbush
Centaurea cineraria - Dusty Miller
Cotoneaster buxifolius
Cotoneaster congestus
Juniperus species - Juniper (in prostrate form)
Baccharis pilularis - Dwarf coyote brush
Ceanothus species - Wild lilac (in prostrate form)
Coprosma Kirkii - Creeping coprosma
Grevillea 'Noellii'
Lantana montevidensis - Trailing lantana
Mahonia repens - Creeping mahonia

- 1.1.7 Continue programs to encourage reuse of treated wastewater as irrigation for ornamental landscaping where appropriate.
- 1.1.8 Allow for adequate groundwater recharge by developing stormwater ponding and retention basins where feasible and consistent with the General Plan's land use policies and the Storm Drainage Master Plan. In selected cases these basins could be combined with recreational uses, or used as habitat areas.
- 1.1.9 Develop a Hazardous Waste Management Plan and, if necessary, a toxics control ordinance to ensure groundwater quality, monitoring and enforcement.



Monitor well water and waterway quality throughout the Visalia planning area in cooperation with Tulare County, water districts, private water companies, and irrigation companies. 1.1.10

Establish water conservation design standards for private development landscaping. 1.1.11

1.2 COMMUNITY WATERWAYS

Objectives

Protect water resources vital to the health of the community's residents and important to the planning area's ecological and economical stability.	A
--	---

Preserve and enhance selected planning area waterways and adjacent corridors as valuable community resources which serve as plant and wildlife habitats, as flood control and irrigation components, and as connections between open space areas	B
--	---

Continue to coordinate development of a community-wide waterway program for irrigation/flood control and recreation use with water districts, irrigation companies, private water companies and state agencies.	C
---	---

(See Figure 6 for Illustration of community waterways.)

Implementing Policies

Protect, and where necessary, restore and enhance a continuous corridor of native riparian vegetation along planning area waterways.	1.2.1
--	-------

Establish a liability agreement between the City and water conservation districts and ditch companies related to public access and trail use and riparian corridor enhancement programs along selected creeks and ditches through the community.	1.2.2
--	-------

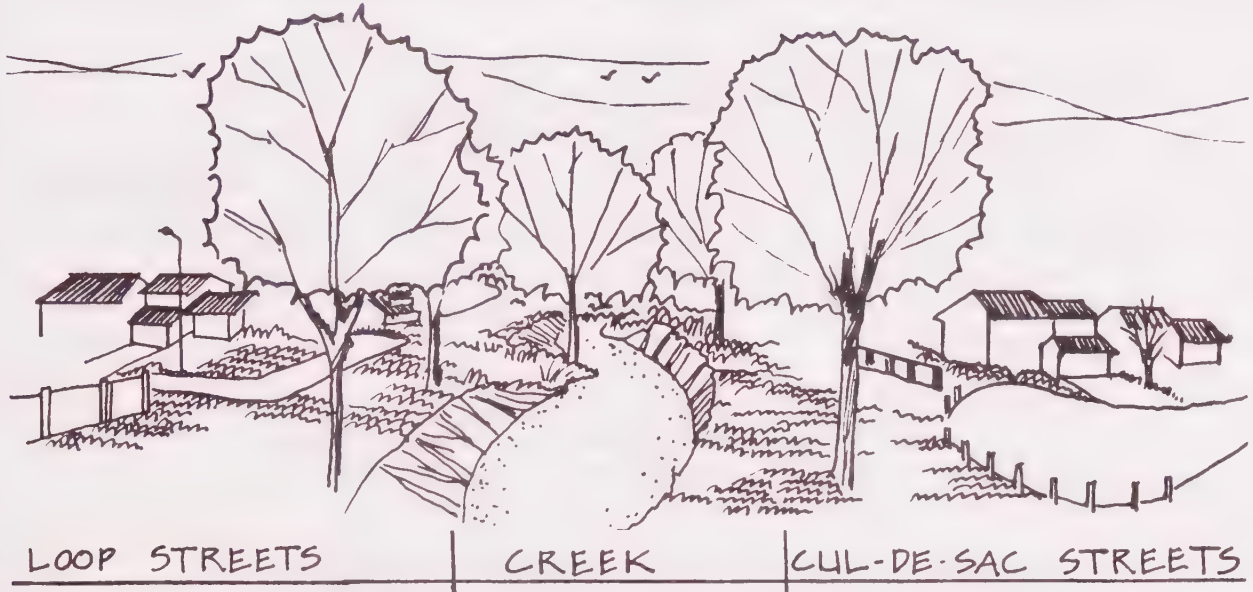
Use transferable development rights, easements or require dedication of land along waterways to protect natural habitat areas, allow maintenance operations and promote trails and bike paths.	1.2.3
--	-------

Residential or commercial development shall not be allowed within development setbacks (defined in standards below) along waterway corridors. Maintenance and emergency access roads, trails, and bike paths are permitted within waterway corridor development setbacks.	1.2.4
---	-------

Discourage "back-on" and "side-on" lot development adjacent to waterways.	1.2.5
---	-------



- 1.2.6 Site public rather than private uses adjacent to waterway corridors such as single-loaded, loop or cul-de-sac streets to promote access, security, and separation from urban development.



- 1.2.7 Protect and enhance the St. John's River Corridor by implementing the following specific policies: *(refer to the Community Waterways map, Figure 6).*

a) Designate the St. John's River islands for Conservation/Open space use on the General Plan and develop a zoning district or ordinance to protect and enhance plant and wildlife habitats. Allow low intensity public use of these islands as interpretative centers for education and research.

b) Adopt the St. John's River Park Master Plan for land acquisition and maintenance to protect riparian plants and wildlife habitat along the river corridor while encouraging low intensity public access and use.

c) Integrate future St. John's River Park expansions into a regional park system linking Cutler Park and Terminus Dam to the east and a future regional park facility at the river's junction with Demaree Road on the west.

d) Develop plans for and evaluate the feasibility of expanding the River Park to the river's north bank and adjacent area for conservation, open space, and recreation needs.

e) Plant native riparian vegetation along the St. John's River levee, in accordance with California Fish & Game, California Water Resources Board (Guide for Vegetation on Project Levees), and Kaweah Delta Water Conservation District standards. Strive to enhance and expand riparian habitat as compatible with flood control purposes.



f) Development proposals adjacent to the St. John's River shall demonstrate how on-site and adjacent natural resources will be protected and buffered from new uses.

Restore, enhance and maintain the natural, scenic, historical and open space quality of the Mill, Packwood, Cameron Creek corridors. **1.2.8**

Restore, enhance and maintain the natural and open space qualities of Modoc, Evans, and Persian ditches. **1.2.9**

Designate Mill Creek/Evans Ditch confluence area as Conservation/Open Space to protect and enhance plant and wildlife habitats. Promote use as an interpretative center for education and research. **1.2.10**

Develop transition and buffer areas on either side of Mill Creek and Evans Ditch to provide some measure of habitat protection. **1.2.11**

Standards

The following standards shall apply to all future uses proposed adjacent to the various community waterways.

Maintain a 100-foot riparian habitat development setback from the St. John's River's south levee's landside outside-bottom toe through land dedication or easements. **1:**

Provide an additional minimum 30-foot firebreak setback from the St. John's River's development setback through use of easements. **2:**

Where no urban development exists, maintain a 50 to 100-foot riparian habitat development setback from the discernible top of the bank for both sides of Mill, Packwood, and Cameron Creek corridors through land dedication or easements. Restore and enhance this area with native vegetation. **3:**

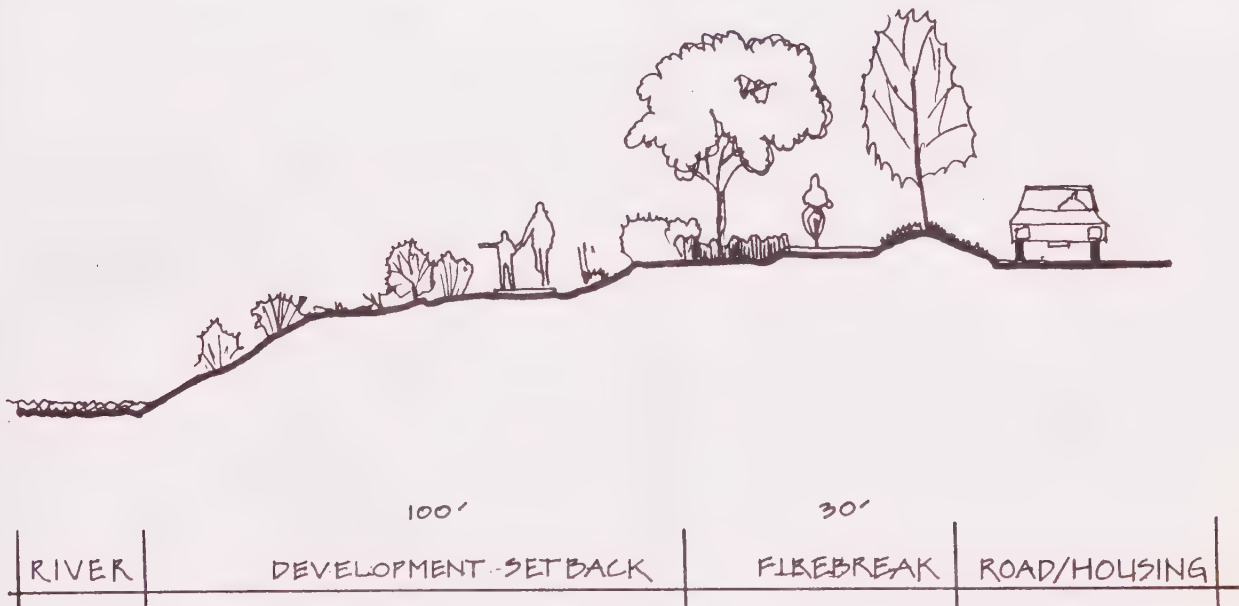
(Note: The width of the 50-100 foot setback shall depend on the following factors. If riparian trees are located within 100 feet of the channel, the setback shall be wide enough to include these trees. The setback shall include five feet outside of the dripline of these trees.)

Where existing development or land committed to development prohibits the 50 to 100-foot setback on Mill, Packwood, and Cameron Creek Corridors, provide the maximum amount of land available for a development setback through land dedication or easements. **4:**

Where no urban development exists, maintain a 25 to 50-foot riparian habitat development setback (from discernible top of bank) for both sides of Modoc, Evans, and Persian Ditches through land dedication or easements. **5:**



- 6: Where existing development or land committed to development prohibits the 25 to 50-foot setback along Modoc, Evans, and Persian Ditches, provide the maximum amount of land available for a development setback through easements.



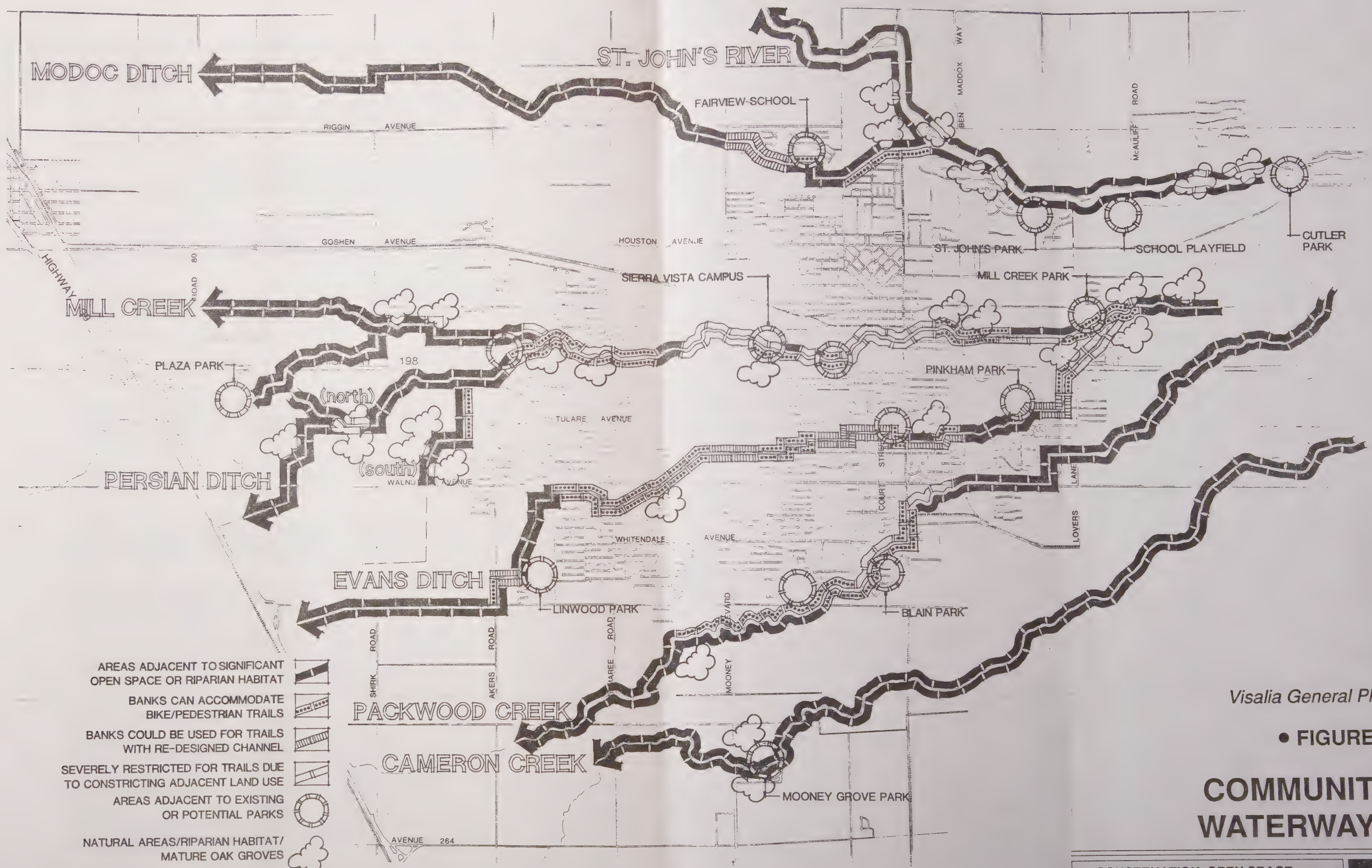
1.3 AIR QUALITY

Objective:

Strive to Improve air quality for the entire planning area.

Implementing Policies

- 1.3.1 Promote maximum use of public transportation and ridesharing to reduce overall vehicular trips.
- 1.3.2 Continue to participate in and support regional planning efforts to meet air quality goals.



Visalia General Plan

• FIGURE 6

COMMUNITY WATERWAYS

CONSERVATION, OPEN SPACE
RECREATION AND PARKS ELEMENT

52a



- Continue to work with the Tulare County Air Pollution Control District to implement the vehicle smog check program and a County Air Quality Attainment Plan (AQAP).

1.3.3
- Continue to mitigate short-term construction impacts and long-term stationary source impacts on a case-by-case basis as directed by the AQAP.

1.3.4
- Prohibit, through the Site Plan Review Process, any development proposal which would significantly reduce vehicular speeds and flow. Significant shall be defined as reducing the service level of a roadway to "D" or below.

1.3.5
- Reduce vehicle trips within the planning area and resultant air pollutants by developing improved and more extensive bikeways, bike storage facilities at major employment centers and public destinations, and pedestrian linkages through the City.

1.3.6
- (See Element Goal 3 and Circulation Element for more on trail, bikeway, and transportation system)*
- Develop a coordinated and efficient roadway and circulation network through the Circulation Element of the General Plan which limits intersection delays, idling time, and other emissions-producing conditions. (See Circulation Element).

1.3.7
- Provide a coordinated land use pattern which, to the maximum degree practicable, results in minimizing vehicle miles travelled in the planning area.

1.3.8
- Promote use of low-pollen landscaping in City parks and open spaces. California natives and riparian species are to be used along community waterway corridors and in selected park spaces.

1.3.9

ALLERGY PRODUCERS		LOW-POLLEN PLANTS
	Trees	
Ash		Chinese Tallow
Sycamore		Strawberry Tree
Sweetgum		Redwood
Acacia		Dogwood
Elm		Palm
Walnut		Fig
Oak		Jacaranda
Cottonwood		Red Bud
Poplar		Maidenhair
Willow		Crape Myrtle
		Magnolia
	Shrubs	
Juniper		Oleander
Elderberry		Manzanita



ALLERGY PRODUCERS

LOW-POLLEN PLANTS

Shrubs, continued

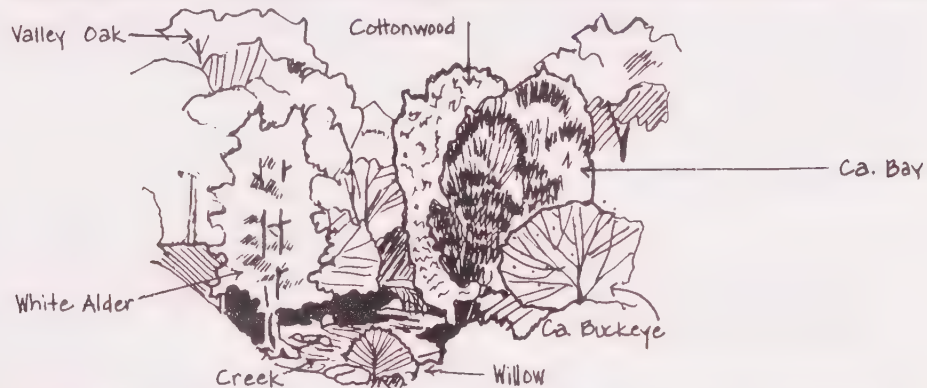
Ceanothus

Pyracantha
Boxwood
Verbena

Grass Lawn

Irish Moss
Bermuda

Dichondra



- 1.3.10 Develop public information and plant materials list on both high-and low-pollen producing landscape species.
- 1.3.11 Work with Chamber of Commerce, local landscape architects, nursery contractors, and arborists to promote landscaping with low-pollen plants.

1.4 WILDLIFE AND NATURAL VEGETATION

Objectives:

- A Preserve and protect natural habitat areas along community waterways.
- B Protect and enhance natural vegetation throughout the Visalia Planning Area.
- C Protect and enhance wildlife listed as rare, endangered, threatened and candidate species.

Implementing

(Refer to the Vegetation and Habitat Map (Figure 3) in accordance with the following policies):



Develop and implement an "Open Space/Conservation" land use designation in the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. Designate the following areas for habitat conservation and open space. **1.4.1**

St. John's River Island
Ghost Island
Cain Street Cottonwood Grove
Modoc Island

Mill Creek/Evans Ditch Jungle
"Hobo Jungle"
Northeast corner of Main Street
/Ben Maddox Way

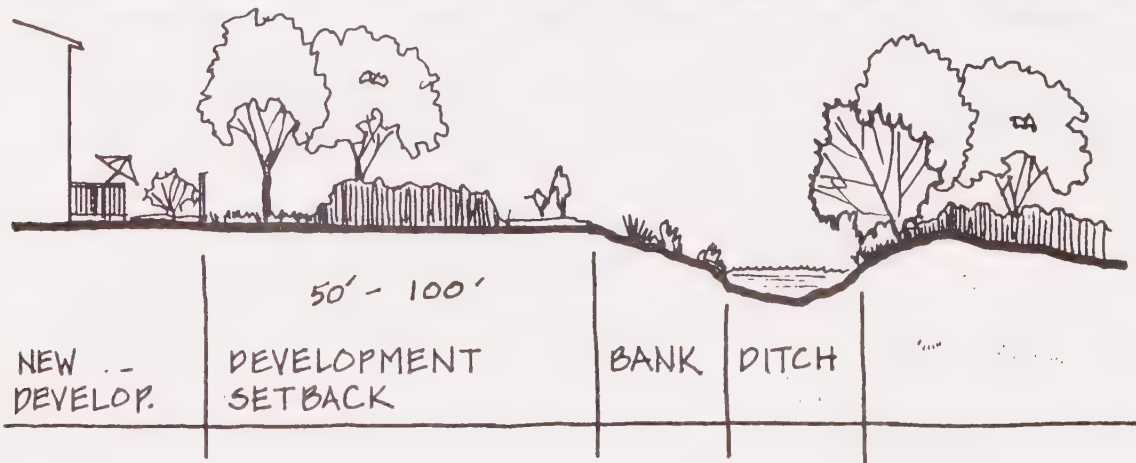
Establish guidelines to limit public access and protect Open Space/Conservation designated areas through development of open space/conservation ordinance. **1.4.2**

Require field surveys for endangered species and rare plants in accordance with state and federal guidelines for new development in areas with potential occurrences. **1.4.3**

Restore and enhance continuous corridors of riparian vegetation along selected community waterways. **1.4.4**

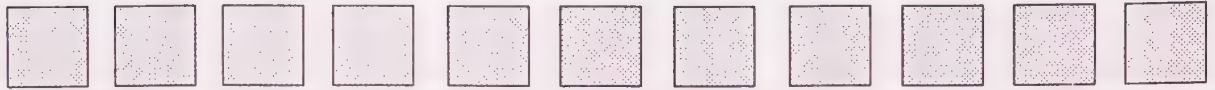
Design selected stormwater ponds and retention basins to serve a dual role as wildlife habitat by planting species appropriate for food and cover needs. Work with a trained professional in design, selection, and management of each site. **1.4.5**

Reforest riparian habitat development setback areas of the planning area with Valley Oaks and other native trees. Plant riparian trees such as sycamore, cottonwood, ash, and willow along waterways. **1.4.6**



Revise the City's Oak Tree Preservation Ordinance to include other mature native trees, and update the map of landmark trees and distinctive biotic areas. **1.4.7**

Coordinate with Tulare County, The Nature Conservancy, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Game, and other state agencies to acquire and manage land preserves which protect valuable habitat. **1.4.8**



- 1.4.9 Consult with California Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and other agencies for review of development projects involving riparian habitat, endangered species habitat, and or other wildlife issues.
- 1.4.10 Develop riparian planting and maintenance standards.
- 1.4.11 Require future development adjacent to the Cain Street cottonwood grove and the Mill Creek/Evans Ditch split area to provide buffer between habitat areas and residential development.
- 1.4.12 Develop a master street tree plan for major public streets.

1.5 HISTORIC AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Objective:

The City's primary objective is to preserve and protect historic features and archaeological resources of the Visalia planning area including its agricultural surroundings for aesthetic, scientific, educational and cultural values.

Implementing Policies

- 1.5.1 Within the Historic District, determine setbacks, street width, space between houses, and other physical parameters contributing to the historical neighborhood character. Use these elements as criteria for reviewing proposed new development adjacent to or within historic districts.
- 1.5.2 Cooperate with Tulare County Historical Society and other civic organizations for appropriate monuments to publicize historic sites.
- 1.5.3 Establish criteria for entryway signage and Historic District gateways.
- 1.5.4 Preserve archaeological sites in the Visalia planning area.
- 1.5.5 Comply with State and Federal requirements for protecting archaeological resources.
- 1.5.6 Develop specific criteria for conversion of historic structures from residential to office and commercial uses
- 1.5.7 Continue to identify, survey and establish new additions to the Historic District and Local Register.





Create and preserve an open space system in the Visalia planning area to meet a variety of needs.

GOAL 2

2.1 OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

Objectives:

Create and protect open space for the preservation of natural resources. A

(See Goal 1 for objectives and policies on conservation and preservation of natural resources.)

Create and preserve open space for outdoor recreation. B

(See Goal 3 for objectives and policies on park and recreation spaces.)

Preserve and protect agricultural use on lands in and surrounding the Visalia Planning Area for open space purposes and managed production of resources. C

Create and maintain open space for public health and safety in areas which require special management or regulation. D

Implementing Policies

Conduct an annual review of cancelled Williamson Act contracts and development proposals on agricultural land within the Urban Area Boundary to foresee opportunities for acquisition, dedication, easements or other techniques to preserve agricultural open space. **2.1.1**

On a City-wide basis, maintain a compact urban form and encourage growth in infill areas to minimize loss of agricultural resources and extension of public services. **2.1.2**

Direct residential and commercial development to areas of non-prime agricultural soils to protect agricultural and open space values. **2.1.3**

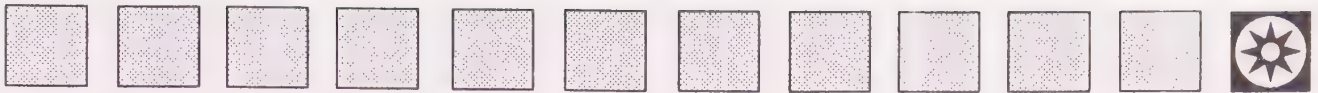
As the circulation system expands in the City and its planning area, design it to discourage land speculation in agricultural areas. **2.1.4**

Develop open space corridors along selected community waterways, power transmission line right-of-ways and abandoned railroad right-of-ways to serve as links between park and recreation facilities. **2.1.5**



- 2.1.6 Maintain open space around the Visalia Municipal Airport to minimize incompatible land uses in accordance with the draft Airport Master Plan and West Visalia Specific Plan.
- 2.1.7 Maintain open space around the Visalia Regional Waste Water Treatment plant to minimize public health concerns and land use conflicts.
- 2.1.8 Maintain open space corridors and green belts between industrial and residential development in all areas of the City.
- 2.1.9 To allow efficient cultivation, pest control and harvesting methods, require buffers and transition areas between urban development and adjoining or nearby agricultural land.



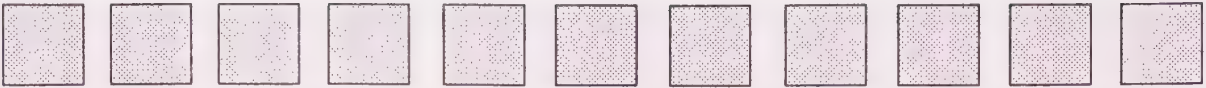


GOAL 3 Develop a high quality public park system which provides adequate space and facilities for varied recreational opportunities which are conveniently accessible to all Visalia residents

GOAL 3

3.1 PARK ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT

Objectives:	
Acquire adequate park sites for future City growth.	A
Bring the amount of Visalia park land into compliance with the City's adopted standards.	B
Provide park sites which respond to the needs of the City's diverse population, including waterway systems, trails and bikeways for pedestrians, joggers and bicyclists, as well as non-traditional types of recreation and open space such as skateboarding, community gardens, and habitat protection.	C
Implementing Policies	
Acquire land for parks and preserves in advance of urban growth and development. Some land may be acquired and left undeveloped until funding becomes available.	3.1.1
Concentrate park acquisition, development and rehabilitation efforts on sites larger than five acres, except where significant resources merit protection or where a mini-park contributes to a scenic roadside character (such as Mayor's Park on Mill Creek).	3.1.2
Acquire and develop a regional park in the northwest and southeast parts of the City.	3.1.3
a) Explore acquisition and development of the Modoc Ditch Company's basin on Riffin Avenue or another suitable site for a water recreation park or riparian habitat preserve.	
b) Evaluate need and develop a fee structure through which non-residential development can contribute to the costs of acquiring, developing and maintaining regional parks in the City's northwest and south-east quadrants.	
c) Investigate land acquisition at the junction of Demaree Road and the St. John's River for a regional park site and investigate the potential of this site as a Heritage Farm Park. Establish a 'Farm Park Task Force' with broad community representation including agriculture, developers, environmental interests, the school district, College of the Sequoias, the City, Tulare County, and others.	



d) Acquire land in the southeast for an 18-hole public golf facility.

- 3.1.4 Develop a cooperative program with Tulare County to encourage future acquisition of Mooney Grove and Cutler regional parks, further defining them as significant parks for the entire region.
- 3.1.5 Encourage private-sector development of recreation facilities such as commercial softball, indoor swimming, golf, etc, that are available to the public.
- 3.1.6 Encourage joint public-private development of commercial recreation facilities.
- 3.1.7 Initiate a citizens' committee to review issues relating to cooperative agreements with various public and private sector groups and locational criteria for City-wide recreation facilities.
- 3.1.8 Compare the costs and benefits of rehabilitating small neighborhood parks versus park disposition and use of funds to purchase larger parks.
- 3.1.9 Review park and recreation facilities demand through periodic surveys. Park amenities, programs, proximity and means of transportation should all be addressed.
- 3.1.10 Add 280 acres of mini, neighborhood and community parks by the year 2000.

3.2 PARK LOCATION AND DESIGN

Objective:

Design parks and recreation facilities which will enhance community identity and which will serve the recreation and social needs of Visallians of all ages, economic situations and physical abilities.

(See Figure 7 for illustration of proposed park facilities)

Implementing Policies

- 3.2.1 Minimize negative impacts to adjacent residential areas when siting park or recreational facilities by requiring fencing and landscaped buffers adjacent to residential frontages.
- 3.2.2 Locate community parks with frontage on an arterial roadway and neighborhood parks with frontage on a collector when possible.



Promote innovative park design that respond to neighborhood needs. **3.2.3**
Engage local artists to collaborate in designing park structures and improvements.

Require private open space and recreational facilities in large-scale residential developments to meet a portion of the open space and recreation needs generated by that development. **3.2.4**

a) Study City open space requirements in planned residential developments and investigate increasing the existing 5% minimum to 15 to 20% and require a minimum area for open space/recreation facilities in any multi-family residential proposal of 11 or more units.

Provide shade in parks by using arbors and other landscaping techniques. **3.2.5**

Encourage child care facilities on or near park sites. **3.2.6**

Standards

The following standards contain guidelines for mini-parks, neighborhood, community, regional and linear parks.

Guidelines for Mini-Parks

1

Description:

Specialized facility that serves a limited population or specific group (tots, senior citizens)

Location:

In downtown and areas with high density multi-family dwellings where few other park facilities are available. Located so that users such as children use controlled intersections to cross major streets.

Service Area:

Less than 1/4 mile radius to serve 500-2000 people

Size:

0.5 - 1 acre

Design:

Enhance the downtown and neighborhood identity. Active play areas separated from sitting areas.

Facilities:

Play apparatus for small children, benches and small picnic areas, lawn and landscaping.



2

Guidelines for Neighborhood Parks

Description:

Landscaped park of limited size primarily for passive recreational needs of all ages, but with designated active areas. Provides scenic and aesthetic value.

Location:

Located near a school or center of neighborhood, or near a distinctive natural feature such as a waterway. Not on arterial streets. Use bikeways and pedestrian pathways to provide access to park.

Service Area:

1/4 to 1/2 mile radius to serve a population up to 5000 people in a neighborhood

Size:

5 to 10 acres (size varies depending upon land availability, ponding basin requirements, and/or additional adjacent area as warranted for park purposes)

Design:

Differentiate neighborhood parks from each other through variety in plantings, play structures, use of sculpture and water, variation of terrain and facilities provided. Provide minimal parking areas and make park accessible by pedestrians and bikes.

Leave areas open and natural when possible.

Provide for picnicking, strolling, other non-organized activities.

Facilities:

Open lawn area, small picnic area, paths, on-street parking, play equipment for children, backstop, multi-use game courts, drinking fountain, landscaping.

3

Guidelines for Community Parks

Description:

Designed to serve broad recreational needs of the community. Includes area of diverse environmental quality and facilities for heavy recreation use such as swimming pools and sports complexes. May be a natural area for outdoor recreation such as walking, viewing, sitting, picnicking.

Location:

Along arterial street. One community park per quadrant is advisable.



Guidelines for Community Parks (Continued)

Service Area:

1 to 2 mile radius, serving 20,000 people in several neighborhoods

Size:

Minimum of 8 acres (size varies, see Neighborhood Park Standards for guidelines)

Design:

Provide parking on site, include connections to City bikeways and open space system along creeks, establish site circulation system to serve all uses.

Enhance natural features such as creeks or ditches, and include other water features.

Integrate park space with public facilities such as police or fire substation where possible.

Facilities:

Large children's play area, reserved picnic facilities, turf areas for unsupervised free play, community building, off-street parking, restrooms, day care facilities. May include tennis courts, outdoor concert areas, and other special facilities.

Guidelines for Regional Parks

4

Description:

Natural area for outdoor recreation including picnicking, boating, fishing, swimming, and hiking.

Location:

Adjacent to or accessible from major arterials or freeway.

Service Area:

Serves several communities within 1 hour driving time

Size:

100 to 200+ acres

Design:

Provide parking on site, centrally located service and information center. Link with City bikeway system, integrate adjacent natural areas into park design.

Facilities:

Large open space areas, large group picnic facilities, restrooms, nature center, trail system, scenic drive, campgrounds, water oriented facilities for boating, swimming, and fishing, competitive sports fields, outdoor arena, golf course, play equipment for varied age groups, tennis courts, concessions.



5

Guidelines for Linear Parks and Trails/Bikeways

Description:

Linear area developed for hiking, biking, horseback riding, etc. developed along natural or built corridor. Used to link park and recreation facilities.

Size:

Sufficient width to protect resources such as riparian habitat corridors and provide room for passive recreational use.

Design:

Incorporates setbacks to protect corridors along waterways, provides staging areas at appropriate intervals for pedestrian, bicycle, or horse access to corridor, and includes setbacks from adjacent residential or commercial development.

(See specific policies for Community Waterways, Goal 1)

3.3 EFFICIENT USE OF FACILITIES

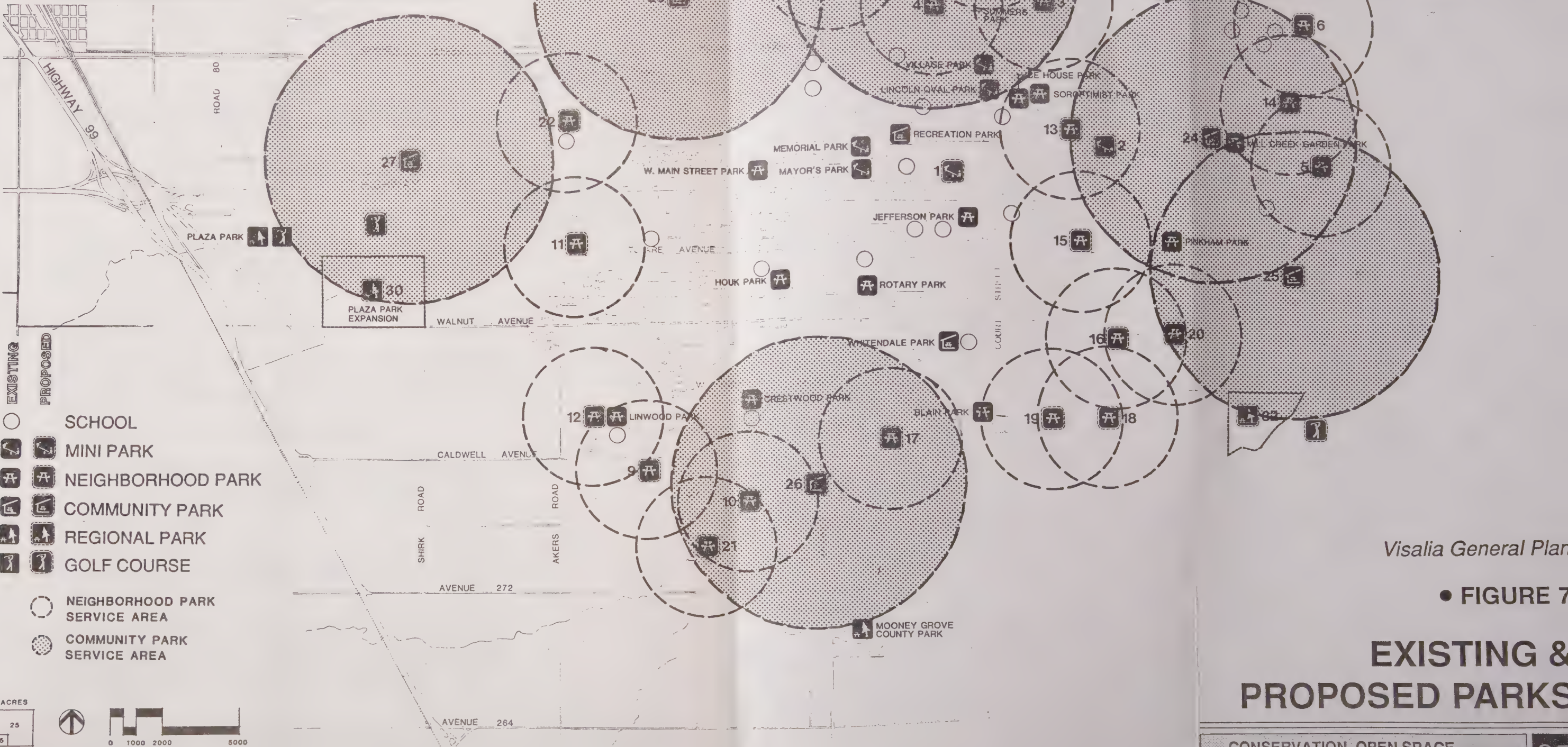
Objectives

Maximize opportunities for joint use of public land and facilities involving schools, stormwater ponding basins and other areas under public jurisdiction suitable for recreation.

Implementing Policies

- 3.3.1** Encourage cooperative agreements with the City and the Kaweah Water Conservation District, levee districts, irrigation companies, school district, College of the Sequoias, Southern California Edison Company and other public agencies and utilities to explore innovative recreation and open space facilities throughout the Visalia planning area.
- 3.3.2** Develop standards for recreation use on dual purpose park/pond sites to ensure that slopes and pumping equipment do not preclude recreation use and maintenance.
- 3.3.3** Work with the Visalia Unified School District (VUSD) to identify and evaluate potential school sites and associated park land.

PROPOSED PARKS		
Mini parks		
1. Kaweah	12. Linwood extension	Community Parks
2. Ben Maddox/Main	13. Burke/Goshen	
Neighborhood Parks	14. Mill Creek/McAuliff	
	15. Tulare/Edison	
	16. Ben Maddox/Walnut	Regional Parks
	17. Dollner/Caldwell	
	18. Monte Vista/Ben Maddox	
	19. Monte Vista/Burke	
	20. Walnut/Pinkham	29. St John's Park extension
	21. Demaree/Packwood Creek	30. Plaza Park expansion
	22. Willow Glen	31. Demaree/St. John's River
		32. Lovers Lane/Cameron Creek



Visalia General Plan

• FIGURE 7

EXISTING & PROPOSED PARKS

CONSERVATION, OPEN SPACE, RECREATION AND PARKS ELEMENT



- a) Develop school master plan and siting criteria in cooperation with VUSD.

Investigate opportunities to locate emergency services substations (police, fire, etc.) adjacent to park sites. **3.3.4**

Coordinate child care with other City art, cultural and recreation programs. **3.3.5**

4 TRAILS AND BIKEWAYS

Objective

Designate and periodically update a safe and feasible trail and bikeway system (on- and off-street) for commuting, recreation and other trips.

(See Figure 8 for illustration of trail and bikeway system)

Implementing Policies

Consider bikeways as an integral part of the City's arterial and collector street design so that bike lanes are included in the right of way as consistent with the City's Circulation Element. Provide bikeways according to the following guidelines: **3.4.1**

a) Provide Class I (separated) bikeways along the St. John's River and along Goshen Avenue.

b) Provide Class II bikeways along selected collector and arterial streets.

c) Provide Class III bikeways along local streets to connect to collectors and arterials.

(See Standards 1-3 pertaining to bikeway criteria)

Develop a community-wide trail and bikeway loop along selected planning area waterways and roadways to link Cutler Park and Plaza Park. Develop the St. John's River, Mill Creek, Persian Ditch, and Cameron Creek as scenic trail, bike path and recreational open space corridors through the community. **3.4.2**

a) Prepare a feasibility study including cost estimates for trail and bikeway acquisition, development, and maintenance. Include assessment of City's liability for developing public trails along urban ditches and creeks.

b) Adopt a maintenance and liability agreement between the City and the irrigation companies. The agreement should define the City's responsibility for implementing and maintaining trails along channels, and for assuming liability for damage resulting from the construction, maintenance, operation or public use of recreation facilities along channels.



- 3.4.3 Reestablish a City bicycle committee through the Park and Recreation Commission, and begin drafting a bicycle ordinance to provide policies for future bicycle facilities and safety programs.
- 3.4.4 Develop and maintain an educational program to promote bicycle use and safety.
- 3.4.5 Develop a bicycle ordinance in conjunction with development of bicycle system facilities. Enforcement should relate closely to bicycle safety education.

Standards

1

Construct Class I bikeways to the following minimum standards:

Bikeway separated from street.

Pedestrian path may be combined with bikeway. Use different paving materials to distinguish bikeway (asphalt paving) from pedestrian/running path (decomposed granite, compacted earth, etc.)
Paved width for path should be 6 to 10 feet.

2

Construct Class II bikeways to the following minimum standards:

Bikeway marked as separate lane within street right of way.

Width of lane marked by striping should be at least 5 feet.

Bikeway should be marked by signs and by bike lane markers painted on the pavement.



OFF-STREET BIKE PATH



ON-STREET BIKE LANE

3

Construct Class III bikeways to the following minimum standards:

Bikeway shared outside traffic lane with vehicles.

Outside traffic lane must be at least 15 feet wide.

Bikeway should be marked by signs.



Provide a range of leisure, recreational and cultural programs and facilities that are accessible and affordable to all segments of the community.

GOAL 4:

4.1 RECREATION PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES

Objectives

Continue to provide a combination of recreation and social service programs and facilities through neighborhood community centers. **A**

Continue to develop and expand special programs for teens, senior citizens, and ethnic populations. **B**

Ensure that a wide variety of quality sports and aquatic opportunities are available to the community. **C**

Continue to provide the community's special populations with specially adapted recreation programs to increase independent living and community involvement. **D**

Continue Visalia's strong volunteer program by expanding meaningful opportunities for community service. **E**

**Implementing
Policies**

Provide at least one community center in each of the City's four neighborhood quadrants. **4.1.1**

Facilitate "all-day" care centers for children and the elderly in accordance with state and county requirements. **4.1.2**

Use community center facilities to provide multi-cultural programs, and teen recreation activities. **4.1.3**

Continue to support Tulare County and private social service agencies to secure funding sources for programs in self-sufficiency and job training for Southeast Asian and Hispanic populations. **4.1.4**

Sponsor surveys of high school students to determine recreation needs and desires. **4.1.5**

Include teens in the design and management of programs for teens. **4.1.6**

Utilize and expand the Senior Center as Visalia's primary facility for recreation, education, in-home services, and meal programs for seniors. **4.1.7**



- 4.1.8 Develop programs to complement the School District's evolving year-round school schedule.
- 4.1.9 Offer nature study programs to increase community awareness of open space opportunities and habitat enhancement in City parks and along community waterways.
- 4.1.10 Relocate Plaza Park softball facilities and develop a softball complex to provide additional fields.
- 4.1.11 Establish a regional soccer facility in conjunction with a high school in either the northwest or southeast quadrant.
- 4.1.12 Provide an indoor community swimming pool complex in conjunction with a new high school in either the northwest or southeast quadrant.
- 4.1.13 Develop mini-gyms in community centers and at junior high schools for indoor recreation programs such as volleyball and basketball.
- 4.1.14 Encourage barrier-free design in all new recreation and sports facilities, and renovate existing facilities to remove barriers to handicapped users.

4.2 CULTURAL ARTS AND RESOURCES

Objective

Establish Visalia as a regional cultural and performing center in the San Joaquin Valley.

Implementing Policies

- 4.2.1 Promote and facilitate the development of local artists and craftspersons as described by the following specific policies:
 - a) Facilitate development of exhibit areas within public and private facilities (civic centers, community centers, senior center, shopping malls, office and retail buildings, banks, etc.) to make the work of local artists more accessible.
 - b) Develop a program for residence, studio, and sales space for local artists and craftspersons in the East Visalia Redevelopment Project Area.
 - c) Encourage a Festival Market (i.e. Farmers Market or Saturday Market) in the East Visalia Redevelopment Project Area to promote local art, crafts and produce.
 - d) Develop a program for public art by local artists in outdoor open space on public and private sites including roadway gateways to the community, City parks, wall murals, and mass transit vehicles focusing on Visalia's history and cultural diversity.



Investigate potential for a City ordinance requiring all public works projects to dedicate a certain percentage of total construction costs for public art, cultural programs, and/or facilities. **4.2.2**

Develop an annual Arts Exchange Planning Conference with a cross-section of community representatives to target feasible goals, action plans, and financing to promote cultural arts and resources in the planning area. **4.2.3**

Develop a performing arts center in accordance with a Convention Center Expansion Master Plan. **4.2.4**

Investigate and develop sites in the East Visalia Redevelopment Project Area for an outdoor amphitheater. **4.2.5**

Continue to coordinate cultural arts programs and planning with the Tulare County Cultural Arts Council. **4.2.6**

Continue to participate in and expand programs such as the "Artists in the Schools" program in the areas of film, visual arts, literature, music, theater, and dance. **4.2.7**

(Goal 5 objectives and policies are contained in the Implementation Chapter.)







IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter summarizes various methods and procedures the City can pursue to implement the conservation, open space, park and recreation goals outlined in this Element. The chapter includes ways to fund the necessary planning, acquisition, rehabilitation, and development projects outlined in the Element as well as proposed park development and improvement projects. Implementation methods recommended include innovative ways to raise funds and planning and regulatory approaches to securing open space and conservation values through the land use process.

The first section of this chapter includes goals, objectives and policies related to implementation and funding.

The second section of the chapter includes the City's proposed park development and improvement project list as a reference for both short and long term park and recreation projects.

Structure an Implementation program for achieving the policies of this element through a combination of public and private funds, regulatory processes, and innovative strategies.

GOAL 5

5.1 FUND RAISING

Objective

Submit a "quality of life" bond issue or tax increase proposal to the voters in June or November of 1990. A

Implementing Policies

Appoint the Park and Recreation Commission to review immediate future needs as outlined in this Element and make an estimate of the total funding required over a ten year period to finance this program. 5.1.1

Conduct a community survey assessing whether Visalia residents will pay for the program suggested and in what form, as well as how much. 5.1.2

Determine the feasibility of a tax increase or bond referendum based on the survey results and commission consensus. 5.1.3



Objective

- B Develop a non-profit foundation or a "Friends of Visalia Parks" program to provide funding in a wide variety of ways for the sole advancement of conservation, open space, parks and recreation.**

Implementing Policies

- 5.1.4** Establish a City-wide or County-wide organization, or a group consisting of Visalia and other nearby communities.
- 5.1.5** Recruit prestigious individuals within the community to serve on the organization board who can donate or attract contributions.
- 5.1.6** Explore a variety of methods to acquire funding and contributions of land through the foundation, including the following:

*Wills and Bequests.
Gifts of Life Insurance.
Charitable Remainder Trusts.
Gifts Catalogue.*

Alternatives for Acquiring Land.

*Life Estates,
Contributions of surplus real estate,
Unilateral" options on property desired
at a low option price,
Sequential donations or purchases,
Tax delinquent property, and
Purchase and leaseback programs with landowners.*

- 5.1.7** Explore an "Adopt-a-Park" concept with industry, service clubs, and citizens. Identify interested corporations, clubs, or individuals and create an action plan tailored to fit the adopting organization's budget and interest.

Objective

- C Ensure that Visalia receives its full share of federal and state grant funds including matching and competitive grants.**

Implementing Policies

- 5.1.8** Explore state funding possibilities including leftover park bond funds; the revised Roberti-Z'berg-Harris legislation of 1984 (AB 737); grants from the Resources Agency and the Grants section of the Department of Parks and Recreation; and line items in the state budget sponsored by local legislators.



Explore financing from the Department of Water Resources through the Water Conservation and Water Quality Bond Act of 1986 as part of groundwater aquifer recharge projects which might link recreation and water management. **5.1.9**

Seek funding from the Wildlife Conservation Board, the implementation arm of the State Department of Fish and Game, for wildlife preserves or open space. **5.1.10**

Explore grants or matching fund opportunities from the State Environmental License Plate Fund, established in 1970. These funds are generally ear-marked for protection, restoration and enhancement of habitat and ecological preserves. **5.1.11**

Explore federal funding possibilities including acquisition grants from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, administered by the National Park Service. **5.1.12**

5.2 PLANNING AND REGULATORY TOOLS

Objective

Continue to explore expanded Inter-agency agreements and joint powers agreements with other jurisdictions and private conservation organizations.	D
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Implementing Policies

Develop cooperative efforts with the Kaweah Delta Water Conservation District and explore funding for joint projects through grants from the State Department of Water Resources (e.g., purchase of abandoned borrow pits to be used jointly as water recharge basins and water-oriented parks).	5.2.1
--	--------------

Maintain active contact with the Nature Conservancy regarding additions to the Kaweah Oaks Preserve, programs at Mooney or Cutler parks and acquisition of new open space sites throughout the area. The Trust for Public Land or Nature Conservancy may temporarily acquire property for subsequent re-purchase or transfer to the City.	5.2.2
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Objective

Utilize ordinances, easements, restrictive covenants and other tools to negotiate with landowners and developers to ensure that significant natural resources and open space are protected during development.	E
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Implementing Policies

- 5.2.3** Explore the use of open space easements, a voluntary program authorized by the Open-space Easement Act of 1974, through which local governments can obtain the conservation value of property which it does not own.

The open-space easement is a restriction which runs with the land, and restricts the potential use of land for the purpose of preserving its natural or scenic character. Upon acceptance or approval of an open space easement, the City could not issue any building permit for a structure that would violate the terms of the easement. The benefit to the landowner who either grants or sells such an easement is a reduction in property tax assessments and in an income tax deduction. The acquisition of open-space easements by the City must be in compliance with this Element.

- 5.2.4** Explore the use of conservation easements, established through the California Conservation Easement Act of 1979. A conservation easement is similar to an open-space easement, except that it can be granted to a private organization or individual instead of a local government.

The Conservation Easement Act established the basis for legal enforcement of a negative or restrictive easement between two private parties. The City retains the responsibility for final approval of the easement and accepts reduced tax revenue reflecting the conservation value of the property.

- 5.2.5** Continue to use the Land Conservation Act of 1965 (Williamson Act) to restrict the use of the land to agricultural or conservation purposes in exchange for a reduction in property tax assessment valuation.

A Williamson Act contract extends for a ten-year term and is automatically renewed annually unless the contract is cancelled by the landowner, at which point the landowner pays a cancellation fee and all deferred taxes on the property. The Williamson Act was originally drafted for the protection of agricultural uses but can be used to protect scenic highway corridors, wildlife habitat, and recreation areas as well.

- 5.2.6** Use transferable development rights (TDRs) to allow the development rights of a parcel located in an area of significant resource value to be transferred to another location with less resource value.

The transfer of these rights allows a developer to build on the development parcel at higher densities than would otherwise be allowed under zoning, and preserves the parcel with resource value. The City also has the option of directly purchasing the development rights.

- 5.2.7** Use restrictive covenants as an agreement between two parties to restricts the use of land to a specific purpose in order to preserve significant wildlife habitat or other resource values of the land.

The covenant runs with the land, and is enforceable against any future owners of the property.



PROPOSED PARK, DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

The following are recommended park and improvement projects to be undertaken during the next 10 years. These projects have been identified based on the Capital Improvement Plan, Storm Drainage Master Plan, and projected neighborhood quadrant needs from population estimates. These proposed projects are not fixed and could be adjusted because of unforeseen funding conditions. Estimated expenditures are based on 1988 dollars.

Northeast Neighborhood Quadrant - 1			
1989-1994			
PROJECT	ACREAGE	TYPE	EXPENDITURES \$ IN 000
1. Fairview	12.0	Community	425
2. St. John's River (Phase 2 - Ben Maddox/McAuliff)	70.0*	Linear	500
3. North Burke/ Buena Vista	10.0	Neighborhood	315
4. Kaweah	1.0	Mini	250
5. Recreation Park Upgrade	10.0	Community	300
6. Soroptimist Park Tot Lot	2.5	Neighborhood	15
7. Vine/Conyer	5.0	Neighborhood	125
8. Mill Creek Evans Ditch (Jungle)	7.0	Conservation/ Open Space	--
9. Coopman Park	13.0	Community <small>when combined w/ Mill Creek Garden</small>	500
10. Lincoln Oval Tot Lot	1.7	Mini	15
11. Ben Maddox Way/Main	1.5	Mini	--
*Community-wide facility-area not included in NE Neighborhood Quadrant (70 acres includes river channel of which 50 acres are land area).			
1995-2000			
1. McAuliff/Stapp (Oakes Ditch)	5.0	Neighborhood	100



Northeast Neighborhood Quadrant - 1
(continued)

1995-2000

PROJECT	ACREAGE	TYPE	EXPENDITURES \$ IN 000
2. McAuliff/Houston	6.0	Neighborhood	100
3. St. John's River (Phase 3 - Ben Maddox-Santa Fe RR)	30.0	Regional	--
4. Riverbend	3.5	Neighborhood	--
5. Mooney/Wren	2.0	Neighborhood	--
6. Burke-Goshen	7.0	Neighborhood	--
7. Mill Creek/McAuliff	8.0	Neighborhood	100

Long-range park and open space planning objectives for the Northeast Quadrant include the following:

- a. Cutler Park integration and expansion into St. John's River Park. --
- b. Conservation/open space area between Mill Creek and Packwood Creek at confluence of Kaweah River. --
- c. Downtown open space planning particularly along Mill Creek. --
- d. St. John's north levee integration into River Park. --

Southeast Neighborhood Quadrant - 2

1989-1994

1. Rotary Park Tot Lot	2.5	Neighborhood	15
2. Tulare-Edison	12.0	Neighborhood	150
3. Whitendale Park Expansion	7.0	Community	--

1995-2000

1. Dollner/Caldwell	3.0	Neighborhood	75
2. Feemster/McAuliff	21.0	Community	--
3. Monte Vista/ Ben Maddox	10.0	Neighborhood	--



Southeast Neighborhood Quadrant - 2 (continued)			
1995-2000			
PROJECT	ACREAGE	TYPE	EXPENDITURES \$ IN 000
4. Monte Vista/Burke	8.0	Neighborhood	--
5. Evans Ditch Parkway (Court/Watson and Mooney/Woodland)	--	Linear	--
6. Walnut/Pinkham	6.0	Neighborhood	--
<i>Long-range park and open space planning objectives for the Southeast Quadrant Include the following:</i>			
a. Southeast Quadrant regional park with 18-hole golf facility to act as UAB buffer.			--
b. Southeast high school location with either tournament-scale soccer or indoor swimming facility.			--
c. Caldwell corridor open space and bikepath system.			--
d. Mooney Grove Park acquisition and integration into City's system.			--
Southwest Neighborhood Quadrant - 3			
1989-1994			
1. Linwood (Crenshaw/ Evans Ditch)	6.0	Neighborhood	150
2. Tulare/Crenshaw	3.5	Neighborhood	117
3. Packwood Creek/ County Center	9.0	Neighborhood	--
4. Public/private softball complex	40.0	Community	--
1995-2000			
1. Mooney/Packwood Creek	20.0	Community	--
2. Demaree/Packwood Creek	6.0	Neighborhood	--



Southwest Neighborhood Quadrant - 3
(continued)

1989-1994

PROJECT	ACREAGE	TYPE	EXPENDITURES \$ IN 000
3. Caldwell/Chinoweth	10.0	Neighborhood	--
<i>Long-range park and open space planning objectives for the Southwest Quadrant include the following:</i>			
a. Plaza Park relocation and expansion.			--
b. Airport and waste water treatment plant public health and safety open space protection.			--
c. Habitat conservation open space west of SH 99			--
d. Packwood Creek linear park from Mooney to Demaree.			--
e. Caldwell corridor open space and bikepath.			--

Northwest Neighborhood Quadrant - 4

1989-1994

1. Willow Glen	4.0	Neighborhood	180
2. Goshen Ave. Bikeway	--	Linear	740

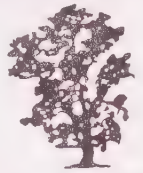
1995-2000

1. Shirk/Mill Creek (North & South Branches)	40.0	Community	--
2. Demaree/Ferguson softball complex	30.0	Community	--
<i>Long-range park and open space planning objectives for the Northwest Quadrant include the following:</i>			
a. Water park development potential for Modoc Ditch's 132-acre sink basin on Riggins.			--
b. Regional park facility (Heritage Farm) at the junction of Demaree and the St John's River.			--
c. Northwest high school location with either tournament scale soccer or indoor swimming facility.			--
d. Open space transition/buffer for industrial and residential areas.			--
e. Goshen community park location.			--



Community-wide	
1989-1994	
	EXPENDITURES \$ IN 000
1. Community waterway corridor acquisition and development feasibility study.	--
2. Community-wide bikeway system development.	--
3. Capital assessment program for park/open space cultural/recreation facilities.	--
4. Scenic corridor acquisition and development.	--
5. Future needs and funding program development.	--





APPENDIX A

1. NORTHEAST

The northeast quadrant includes a wide variety of land uses; the central business district, historic district, industrial and commercial uses, and single-family and multi-family residences. The area around Oval Park is one of Visalia's earliest subdivisions. More recent residential development has been primarily cluster housing or small lot single-family homes in the northern and northeastern portions of the quadrant, reflecting the need to provide a range of affordable housing types. The large Golden West/Valley Oaks school complex serves many of the City's recreation needs for swimming and open field sports. The location of the St. John's River along the northern City border offers opportunities for habitat preservation, recreation, and trails.

Population/Age:

- 27 % of the City's total population lives here.
- High percentage of children under 16 years of age.
- High percentage of persons over 60 years of age.

Ethnicity:

- Over 50% of the City's Hispanic population lives in this area.
- A large Laotian population (approximately 2000 people) has settled in this area since 1983; 60% are under 18 years of age.

Income/Employment:

- Average incomes vary from 66% of the City average (mostly in the western half of the area) to about 90% of the City average (mostly in the eastern half).
- Almost half of the City's agricultural labor force lives in this area.
- Number of families below the poverty level is 1.5 times the City average.

Housing:

- Majority of housing in western half built prior to 1950.
- Almost half of the housing in the eastern half built since 1975.
- Almost all of the City's low-income housing is located in the western half of this quadrant.

Future Growth:

This area is mostly built out in the areas near downtown. Potential for growth exists mainly in the northern and northeastern portions; development will be guided by the



Northeast Specific Plan. Redevelopment near the Visalia Convention Center and revitalization of the downtown business district, along with expansion and development of the Ice House area, will strengthen community resources. Phased development of a senior block complex should continue through development of a master plan.



City Parks

1. Recreation Park--14 ac
2. Lincoln Oval Park--1.75 ac
3. Village Park--.75 ac
4. Summers Park--3.7 ac
5. Ice House Park--2 ac
6. Soroptomist Park--2 ac
7. Mayors Park--0.6 ac
8. Memorial Park--1 ac
9. Mill Creek Garden Park--8 ac

School Recreation Facilities

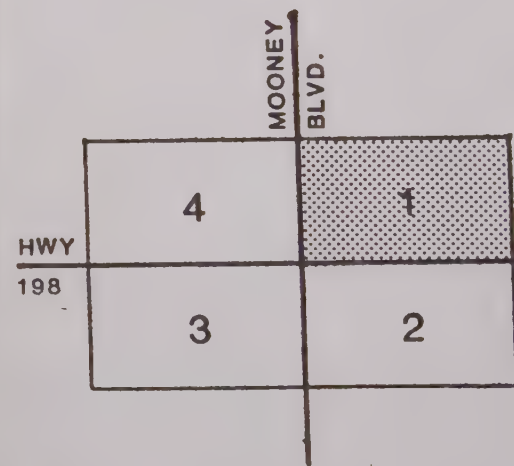
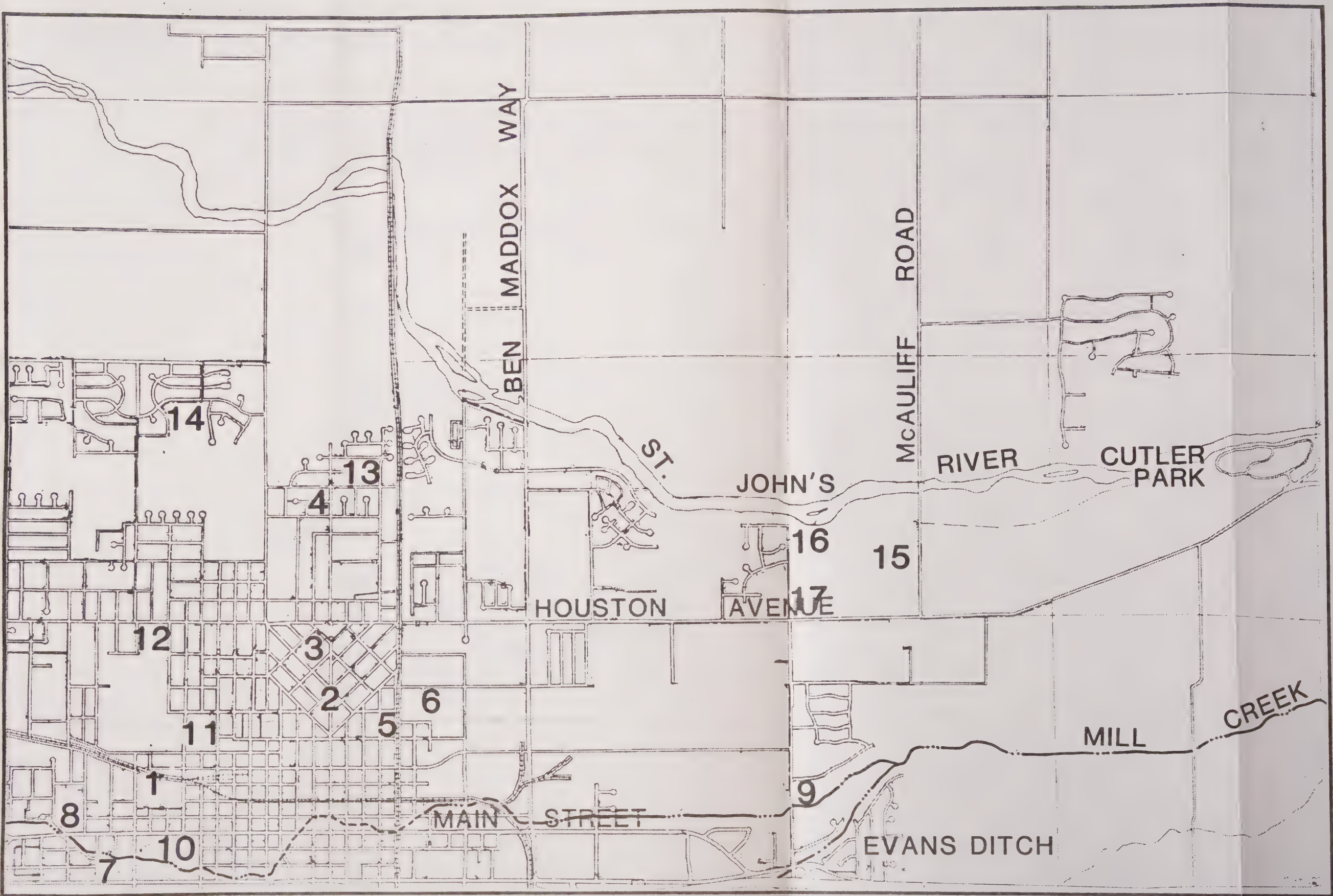
10. Redwood H.S.--T, Bk, S, B, H. O/S-6 ac
11. Highland Elem.--S, PG. O/S-3.6 ac
12. Houston Elem.--S, F, Bk, PG. O/S-7.3 ac
13. Crowley Elem.--S, Bk, PG, P. O/S-4 ac
14. Fairview Elem.--S, Bk, PG, P. O/S-12 ac
15. Golden West H.S.--S, B, Soc/FB, T, Pool, Gym, O/S-22 ac.
16. Valley Oaks Jr. H.S.--S, Soc/FB, Bk, B, V, O/S-17 ac.
17. Golden Oak Elem.--Soc/FB,S, Bk, O/S-8 ac.

Community Facilities

Lincoln Oval: Oval Service Center
 Summers Park: North Visalia Community Center
 Ice House Park: Creative Center for the Handicapped, Visalia Players Theatre
 Senior Citizens Center
 Redwood Community Pool
 Visalia Convention Center
 L.J. Williams Theatre
 Rotary Theatre
 Recreation Park Stadium
 Mineral King Bowl
 St. John's Community Pool
 House of Volunteers
 Special Services Field Office
 Fairview Center
 County Library
 Recreation Center
 Bill Wittman Center

(KEY:

T-Tennis	O/S-Open Space
Bk-Basketball	PG-Playground
S-Softball	Soc/FB-Soccer/Football
B-Baseball	H-Handball
V-Volleyball	





2. SOUTHEAST

Industrial, commercial, and retail uses are concentrated along the Mooney Boulevard corridor and the northern portions of the area. Residential uses are mostly single-family homes. Subdivisions are beginning to crowd out existing orchards and growth is likely to continue to push southwards.

Population/Age:

- 33% of the City's total population lives here.
- Number of children under 16 years of age higher than City average.

Ethnicity:

- Approximately 90% Caucasian.

Income and Employment:

- In the northwest quarter of this quadrant, less than 1% of families are below the poverty level.
- High concentration of persons employed in managerial and professional occupations.
- Incomes generally lower in eastern half of quadrant.

Housing:

- New subdivisions creating growth in several areas.
- Housing development concentrated on single family homes.

Future Growth:

Although large portions of this quadrant are still undeveloped and used for agriculture, future growth pressures are expected to be high. Housing will continue to replace orchards. Redevelopment in East Visalia and along Mooney Boulevard, along with expansion of urban services southwards toward Cameron Creek, will continue to encourage growth and development. Pressures on recently constructed parks reflect the need for more parks and open space to balance the rapid growth now occurring and expected to continue.





City Parks

1. Rotary Park--2.5 ac
2. Jefferson Park--3.5 ac
3. Whitendale Park--10 ac
4. Blain Park--8 ac
5. Tulare/Pinkham--2.6 ac

School Recreation Facilities

6. Divisadero Jr. H.S.--Bk, B, S, Soc/FB. O/S-7 ac
7. Conyer School--Bk, Soc/FB, S, O/S-5 ac
8. Mt. Whitney H.S.--T, H, Bk, V, B, Soc/FB, S, Gym, Track. O/S-32 ac
9. Washington Elem.--Bk, S, Soc/FB, V, PG, O/S-2 ac
10. Mountain View Elem.--Bk, S, Soc/FB, PG. O/S-12 ac
11. Mineral King Union--Soc/FB, Bk, S, O/S-11 ac.

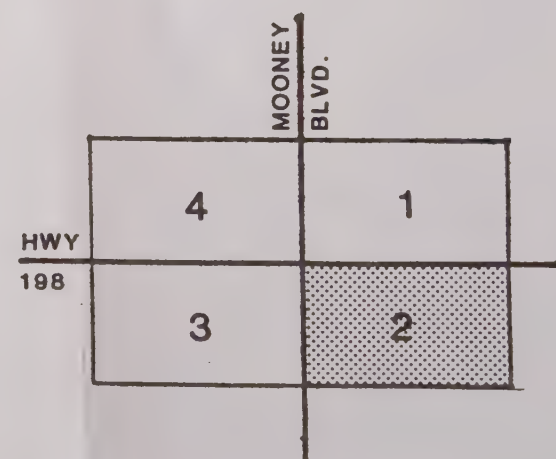
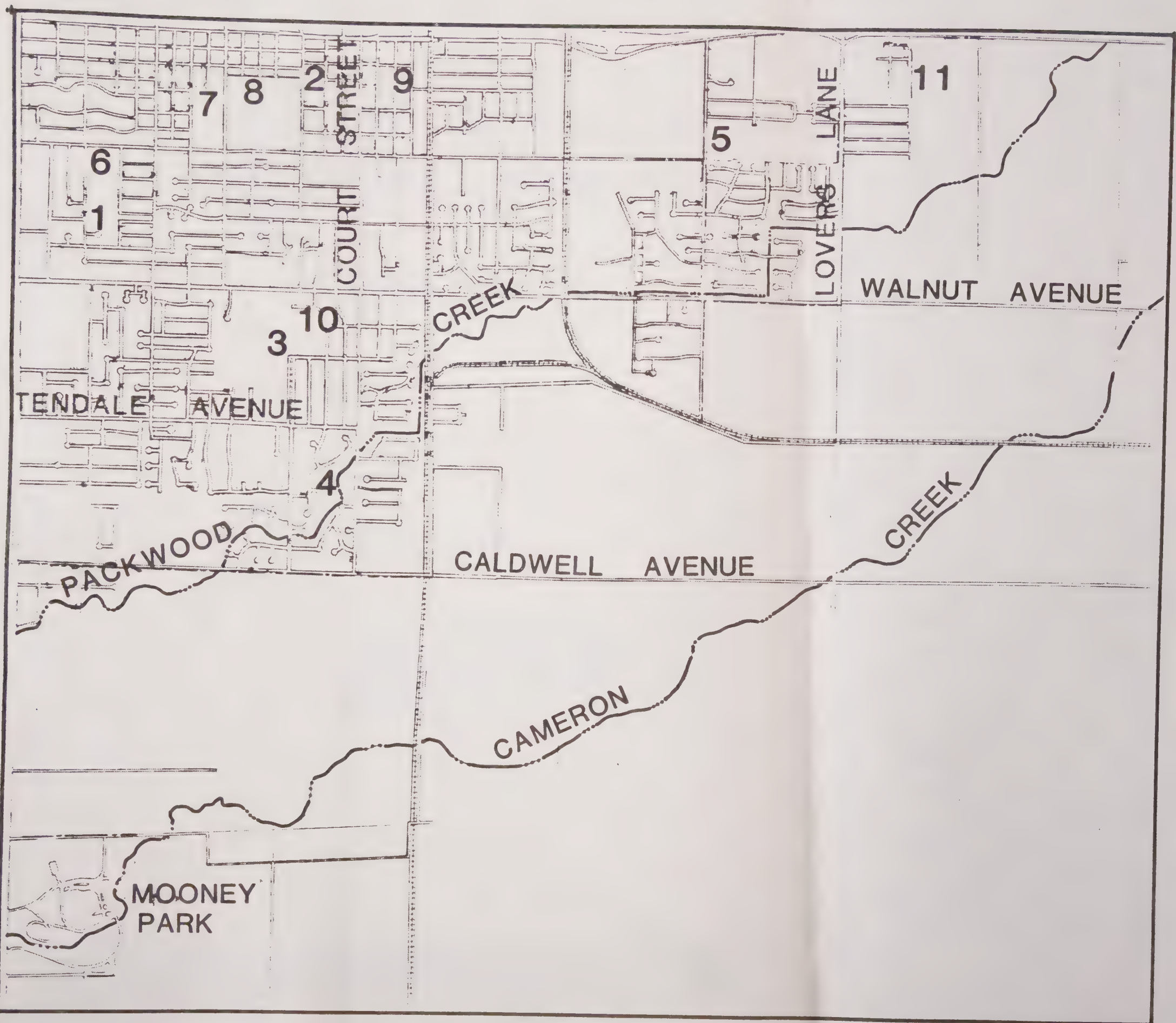
Community Facilities

Visalia Adult School
Blain Park: Concerts in Park
Mt. Whitney High School Pool
Whitendale Community Center

(KEY:

T-Tennis
Bk-Basketball
S-Softball
B-Baseball
V-Volleyball

O/S-Open Space
PG-Playground
Soc/FB-Soccer/Football
H-Handball





3 SOUTHWEST

This area is an older, established neighborhood, with a mix of homes built from the 1950s and 1960s to the present. The area is mostly built out, although potential for growth exists in the southern portion adjacent to Caldwell Avenue, and to the west. In 1980, this area had the largest population of the four quadrants; in 1988, population is slightly below that of the southeast quadrant. Recent adoption of the West Visalia Specific Plan helps clarify guidelines for future development.

Population/Age:

- 33% of City's total population lives here.
- High percentage of children under 16.
- High percentage of teenagers.

Ethnicity:

- Over 90% Caucasian.

Income and Employment:

- Median income slightly above City average.
- Low number of families below poverty level.
- High number of persons employed in managerial and professional occupations.

Housing:

- Housing growth consistent since the 1950's.
- Median home value approximately the City average.

Future Growth:

The northern half of this area is mostly built-out, but additional residential growth is anticipated as the City expands southward. This development will likely continue the median income single-family housing characteristic of the area. Preservation of the scenic corridor entry along Highway 198 will be balanced with pressure for growth in West Visalia.





City Parks

1. Linwood Park--4.8 ac
2. Crestwood Park--2 ac
3. Houk Park--2.4 ac

School Recreation Facilities

4. Linwood Elem.--Bk, S, Soc/FB, V, PG, O/S-7 ac.
5. Crestwood Elem.--Soc/FB, S, Bk, PG, V, O/S-12 ac.
6. Veva Blunt Elem.--Bk, S, Soc/FB, PG. O/S-8 ac
7. Royal Oaks Elem.--Bk, S, Soc/FB, PG. O/S-14.5 ac
8. College of the Sequoias--H, Bk, S, B, V, Gym, Pool, Soc/FB, Golf, Track. O/S-35 ac

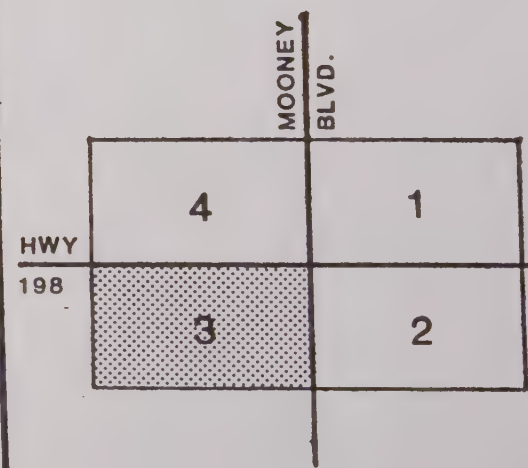
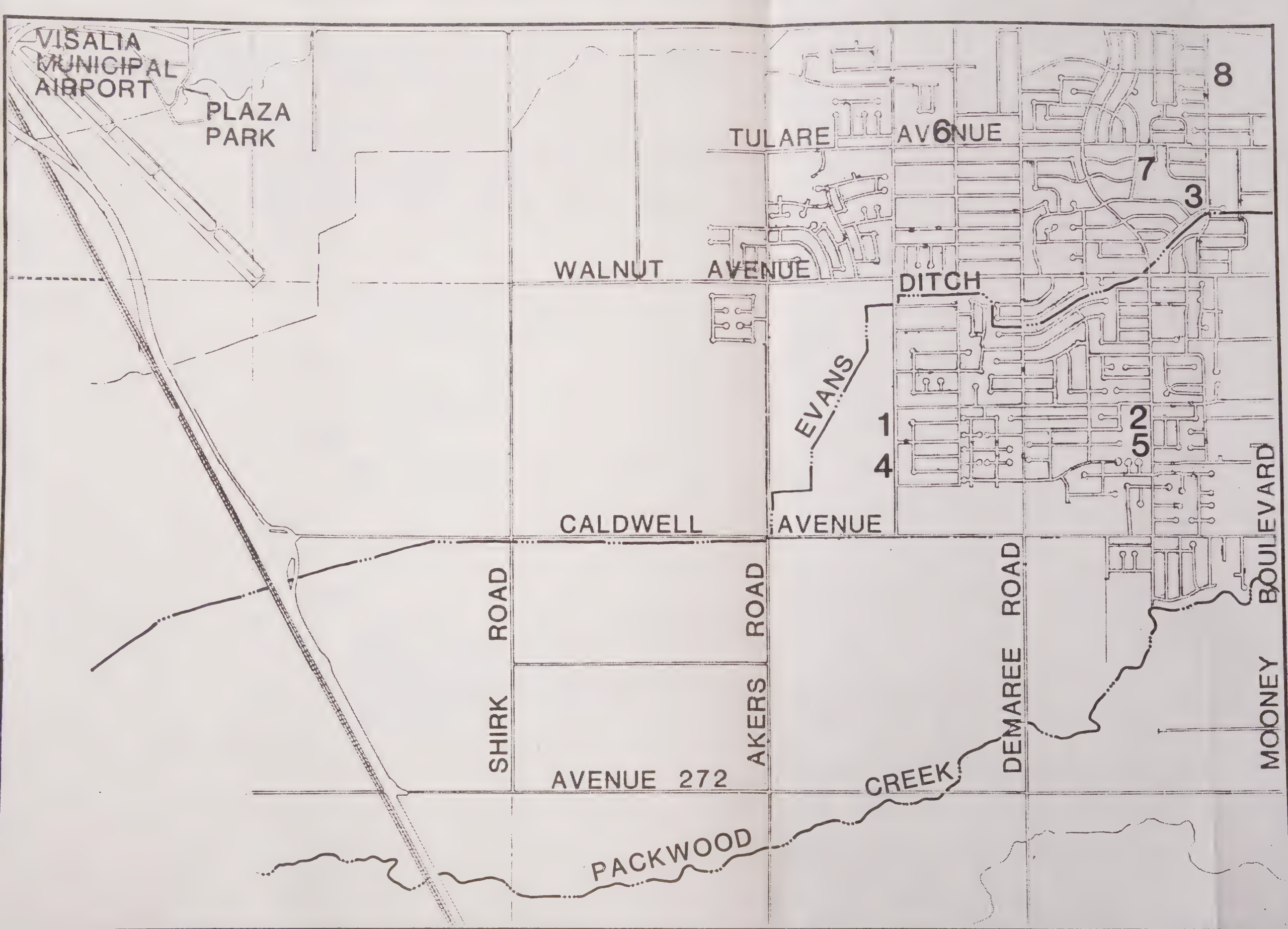
Community Facilities

Linwood Park: Learning Center
Crestwood Park: Outdoor Theatre
Plaza Park Arena and Field Office
Valley Oaks Golf Course and Clubhouse

(KEY:

T-Tennis
Bk-Basketball
S-Softball
B-Baseball
V-Volleyball

O/S-Open Space
PG-Playground
Soc/FB-Soccer/Football
H-Handball





4. NORTHWEST

Single family residences and rural residential development characterize this northern neighborhood, although industrial and commercial uses are prominent along Goshen Avenue. This is the most affluent area in the City, and includes much private open space. Encroachment of residential and industrial uses into agricultural land will continue to the north as growth proceeds.

Population/Age:

- 5% of the City's total population lives here.
- Highest median age of the four quadrants.
- Lowest percentage of families with children.
- Lowest percentage of children under 16 years of age.

Ethnicity:

- 90% Caucasian.
- Lowest percentage of Hispanic residents.

Income and Employment:

- Median income above City average.
- High number of persons employed in managerial and professional occupations.

Housing:

- Median home value above City average.
- Approximately 1/3 of housing units built since 1975.

Future Growth:

Residential growth within this area is anticipated to be among the highest in the City, along with growth in the Southeast quadrant. Upper middle-income, single family residential growth at low densities is expected to continue in subdivisions to the north of Goshen Avenue. Industrial growth in this area and preservation of agricultural landscapes will be major planning and land use issues during the coming years.



City Parks

1. West Main Park--5 ac

School Recreation Facilities

2. Willow Glen Elem.--Soc/FB, S, Bk, PG. O/S-9 ac
3. Green Acres Jr. H.S.--Soc/FB, S, Bk, B, V, O/S-15 ac

Community Facilities

Green Acres Country Club and Golf Course

(KEY:

T-Tennis

Bk-Basketball

S-Softball

B-Baseball

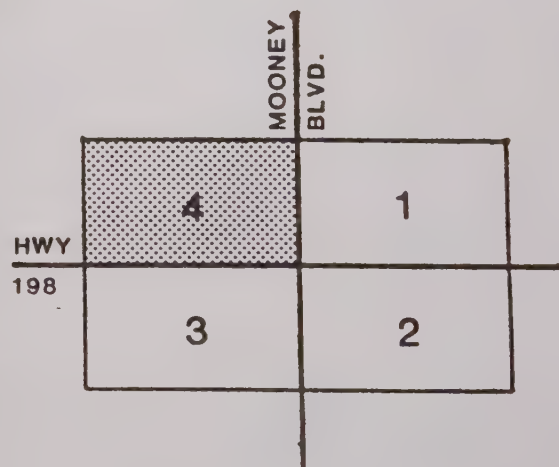
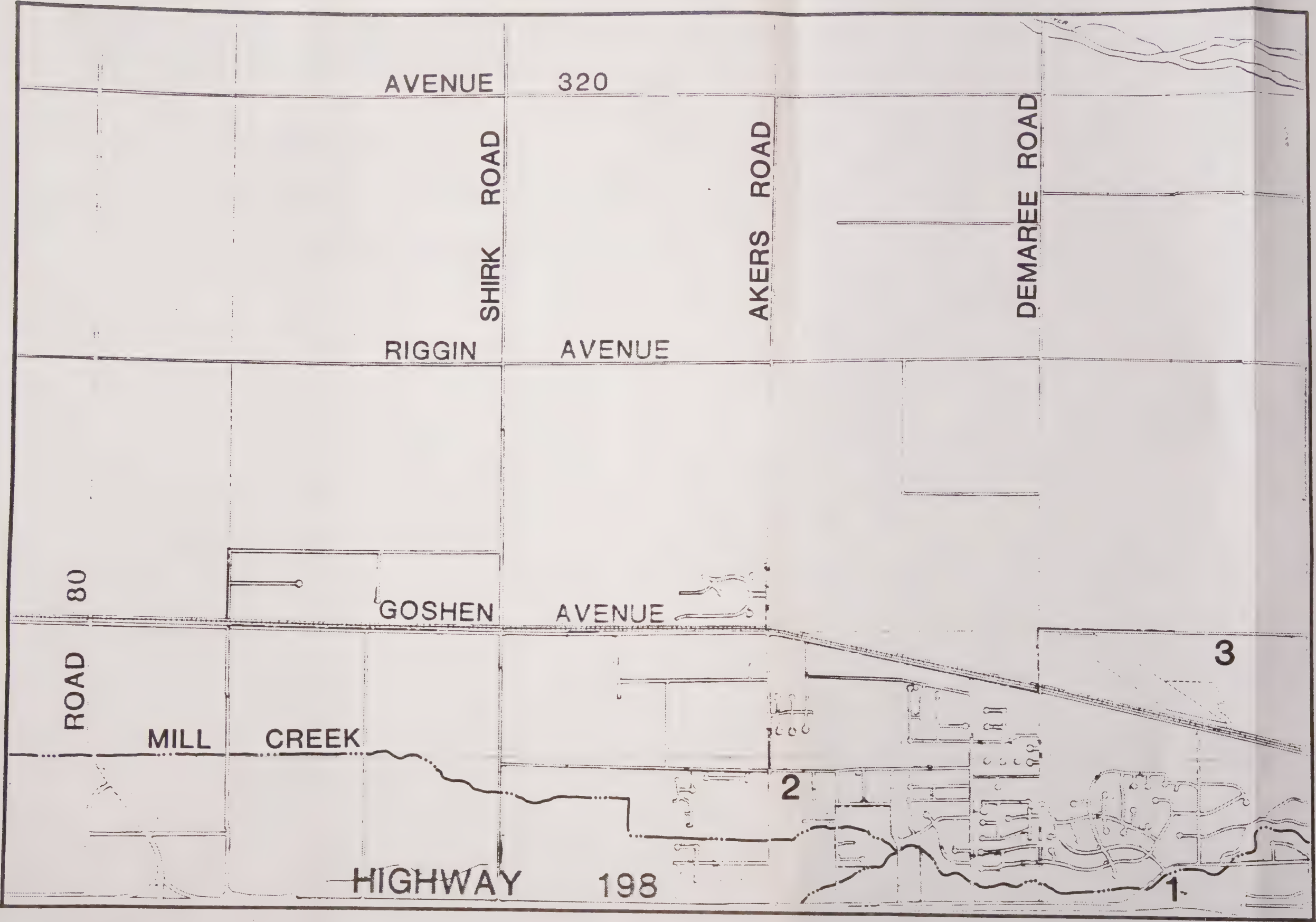
V-Volleyball

O/S-Open Space

PG-Playground

Soc/FB-Soccer/Football

H-Handball





APPENDIX B

The following pages outline national standards from the National Recreation and Parks Association.

This information is grouped by suggested facility standards and recommended open space classification system.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RECREATION OPEN SPACE

This classification system is intended to serve as a *guide* to planning—not as an absolute blueprint. Sometimes more than one component may occur within the same site (but not on the same parcel of land), particularly with respect to special uses within a regional park. Planners of park and recreation systems should be careful to provide adequate land for each functional component when this occurs.

NRPA suggests that a park system, at a minimum, be composed of a “core” system of parklands, with a total of 6.25 to 10.5 acres of developed open space per 1,000 population. The size and amount of “adjunct” parklands will vary from community to community, but *must* be taken into account when considering a total, well-rounded system of parks and recreation areas.

COMPONENT	USE	SERVICE AREA	DESIRABLE SIZE	ACRES/1,000 POPULATION	DESIRABLE SITE CHARACTERISTICS
A. LOCAL/CLOSE-TO-HOME SPACE:					
Mini-Park	Specialized facilities that serve a concentrated or limited population or specific group such as tots or senior citizens.	Less than ¼-mile radius.	1 acre or less	0.25 to 0.5A	Within neighborhoods and in close proximity to apartment complexes, townhouse development or housing for the elderly.
Neighborhood Park/Playground	Area for intense recreational activities, such as field games, court games, crafts, playground apparatus area, skating, picnicking, wading pools, etc.	¼ to ½-mile radius to serve a population up to 5,000 (a neighborhood).	15+ acres	1.0 to 2.0A	Suited for intense development. Easily accessible to neighborhood population—geographically centered with safe walking and bike access. May be developed as a school-park facility.

Community Park	Area of diverse environmental quality. May include areas suited for intense recreational facilities, such as athletic complexes, large swimming pools. May be an area of natural quality for outdoor recreation, such as walking, viewing, sitting, picnicking. May be any combination of the above, depending upon site suitability and community need.	Several neighborhoods. 1 to 2 mile radius.	25+ acres	5.0 to 8.0A	May include natural features, such as water bodies, and areas suited for intense development. Easily accessible to neighborhood served.
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TOTAL CLOSE-TO-HOME SPACE = 8.25-10.5 A/1,000

B. REGIONAL SPACE:

Regional/Metropolitan Park	Area of natural or ornamental quality for outdoor recreation, such as picnicking, boating, fishing, swimming, camping, and trail uses; may include play areas.	Several communities. 1 hour driving time.	200+ acres	5.0 to 10.0A	Contiguous to or encompassing natural resources.
Regional Park Reserve	Area of natural quality for nature-oriented outdoor recreation, such as viewing, and studying nature, wildlife habitat, conservation, swimming, picnicking, hiking, fishing, boating, camping, and trail uses. May include active play areas. Generally, 80% of the land is reserved for conservation and natural resource management, with less than 20% used for recreation development.	Several communities. 1 hour driving time.	1,000+ acres; sufficient area to encompass the resource to be preserved and managed.	Variable	Diverse or unique natural resources, such as lakes, streams, marshes, flora, fauna, topography.

TOTAL REGIONAL SPACE = 15-20 A/1,000

C. SPACE THAT MAY BE LOCAL OR REGIONAL AND IS UNIQUE TO EACH COMMUNITY:

Linear Park	Area developed for one or more varying modes of recreational travel, such as hiking, biking, snowmobiling, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, canoeing and pleasure driving. May include active play areas. (NOTE: any included for any of above components may occur in the "linear park.")	No applicable standard.	Sufficient width to protect the resource and provide maximum use.	Variable	Built or natural corridors, such as utility rights-of-way, bluff lines, vegetation patterns, and roads, that link other components of the recreation system or community facilities, such as school, libraries, commercial areas, and other park areas.
Special Use	Areas for specialized or single purpose recreational activities, such as golf courses, nature centers, marinas, zoos, conservatories, arboreta, display gardens, arenas, outdoor theaters, gun ranges, or downhill ski areas, or areas that preserve, maintain, and interpret buildings, sites, and objects of archeological significance. Also plazas or squares in or near commercial centers, boulevards, parkways.	No applicable standard.	Variable depending on desired size.	Variable	Within communities.
Conservancy	Protection and management of the natural/cultural environment with recreation use as a secondary objective.	No applicable standard.	Sufficient to protect the resource.	Variable	Variable, depending on the resource being protected.

ACTIVITY/ FACILITY	RECOMMENDED SPACE REQUIREMENTS	RECOMMENDED SIZE AND DIMENSIONS	RECOMMENDED ORIENTATION	NO. OF UNITS PER POPULATION	SERVICE RADIUS	LOCATION NOTES
Badminton	1620 sq. ft.	Singles — 17' x 44' Doubles — 20' x 44' with 5' unobstructed area on all sides	Long axis north-south	1 per 5000	¼-½ mile	Usually in school, recreation center, or church facility. Safe walking or bike access.
Basketball 1. Youth 2. High School 3. Collegiate	2400-3036 sq. ft. 5040-7280 sq. ft. 5600-7980 sq. ft.	46'-50' x 84' 50' x 84' 50 x 94' with 5' unobstructed space on all sides	Long axis north-south	1 per 5000	¼-½ mile	Same as badminton. Outdoor courts in neighborhood and community parks, plus active recreation areas in other park settings.
Handball (3-4 wall)	800 sq. ft. for 4-wall, 1000 for 3-wall	20' x 40' — Minimum of 10' to rear of 3-wall court. Minimum 20' overhead clearance.	Long axis north-south. Front wall at north end.	1 per 20,000	15-30 minute travel time	4-wall usually indoor as part of multi-purpose facility. 3-wall usually outdoor in park or school setting.
Tennis	Minimum of 7,200 sq. ft. single court. (2 acres for complex.)	36' x 78'. 12' clearance on both sides; 21' clearance on both ends.	Long axis north-south.	1 court per 2000.	¼-½ mile	Best in batteries of 2-4. Located in neighborhood/community park or adjacent to school site.
Volleyball	Minimum of 4,000 sq. ft.	30' x 60'. Minimum 6' clearance on all sides.	Long axis north-south	1 court per 5000.	¼-½ mile	Same as other court activities (e.g., bad- minton, basketball, etc.)
Baseball 1. Official 2. Little League	3.0-3.85 A minimum 1.2 A minimum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baselines—90' Pitching distance— 60 ½' Foul lines—min. 320' Center field—400'+ • Baselines—60' Pitching distance—46' Foul lines—200' Center field—200'- 250' 	Locate home plate so pitcher throwing across sun and batter not facing it. Line from home plate through pitcher's mound run east-north-east.	1 per 5000 Lighted—1 per 30,000	¼-½ mile	Part of neighborhood complex. Lighted fields part of com- munity complex.
Field Hockey	Minimum 1.5A	180' x 300' with a minimum of 10' clearance on all sides.	Fall season—long axis northwest to southeast. For longer periods, north to south.	1 per 20,000	15-30 minutes travel time	Usually part of base- ball, football, soccer complex in community park or adjacent to high school.

Archery Range	Minimum 0.65A	300' length x minimum 10' wide between targets. Roped clear space on sides of range minimum of 30', clear space behind targets minimum of 90' x 45' with bunker.	Archer facing north + or - 45°.	1 per 50,000	30 minutes travel time	Part of a regional/ metro park complex.
Combination Skeet and Trap Field (8 station)	Minimum 30A	All walks and structures occur within an area approximately 130' wide by 115' deep. Minimum cleared area is contained within two superimposed segments with 100-yard radii (4 acres). Shot-fall danger zone is contained within two superimposed segments with 300-yard radii (36 acres).	Center line of length runs northeast-southwest with shooter facing northeast.	1 per 50,000	30 minutes travel time	Part of a regional/ metro park complex.
Golf						
1. Par 3 (18-Hole)	• 50-60A	• Average length-vary 600-2700 yards	Majority of holes on north-south axis.	---	½ to 1 hour travel time	• 9-hole course can accommodate 350 people/day.
2. 9-hole standard	• Minimum 50A	• Average length—2250 yards		• 1/25,000		• 18-hole course can accommodate 500-550 people a day.
3. 18-hole standard	• Minimum 110A	• Average length—6500 yards		• 1/50,000		Course may be located in community or district park, but should not be over 20 miles from population center.
Swimming Pools	Varies on size of pool and amenities. Usually ½ to 2A site.	<i>Teaching</i> —minimum of 25 yards x 45' even depth of 3 to 4 feet. <i>Competitive</i> —minimum of 25m x 16m. Minimum of 27 square feet of water surface per swimmer. Ratios of 2:1 deck vs. water.	None—although care must be taken in siting of lifeguard stations in relation to afternoon sun.	1 per 20,000 (Pools should accommodate 3 to 5% of total population at a time.)	15 to 30 minutes travel time	Pools for general community use should be planned for teaching, competitive, and recreational purposes with enough depth (3.4m) to accommodate 1m and 3m diving boards. Located in community park or school site.
Beach Areas	N/A	Beach area should have 50 sq. ft. of land and 50 sq. ft. of water per user. Turnover rate is 3. There should be 3-4A supporting land per A of beach.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Should have sand bottom with slope a maximum of 5% (flat preferable). Boating areas completely segregated from swimming areas.

Golf—Driving Range	13.5A for minimum of 25 tees	900' x 690' wide. Add 12' width for each additional tee.	Long axis south-west-northeast with golfer driving toward north-east.	1 per 50,000	30 minutes travel time	Part of golf course complex. As a separate unit, may be privately operated.
¼-Mile Running Track	4.3A	Overall width—276' length—600.02' Track width for 8 to 4 lanes is 32'.	Long axis in sector from north to south to north-west-south-east with finish line at northerly end.	1 per 20,000	15-30 minutes travel time	Usually part of high school, or in community park complex in combination with football, soccer, etc.
Softball	1.5 to 2.0A	Baselines—60' Pitching distance—46' min. 40'—women. Fast pitch field radius from plate—225' between foul lines. Slow pitch—275' (men) 250' (women)	Same as baseball.	1 per 5,000 (if also used for youth baseball)	¼-½ mile	Slight difference in dimensions for 16" slow pitch. May also be used for youth baseball.
Multiple Recreation Court (basketball, volleyball, tennis)	9,840 sq. ft.	120' x 80'	Long axis of courts with <i>primary</i> use is north-south.	1 per 10,000	1-2 miles.	
Trails	N/A	Well defined head maximum 10' width, maximum average grade 5% not to exceed 15%. Capacity rural trails—40 hikers/day/mile. Urban trails—90 hikers/day/mile	N/A	1 system per region	N/A	
Football	Minimum 1.5A	160' x 360' with a minimum of 6' clearance on all sides.	Same as field hockey.	1 per 20,000	15-30 minutes travel time	Same as field hockey.
Soccer	1.7 to 2.1A	195' to 225' x 330' to 360' with a 10' minimum clearance on all sides.	Same as field hockey.	1 per 10,000	1-2 miles	Number of units depends on popularity. Youth soccer on smaller fields adjacent to schools or neighborhood parks.

NEGATIVE DECLARATION

CONSERVATION, OPEN SPACE, RECREATION & PARKS ELEMENT

CITY OF VISALIA
707 West Acequia Avenue
Visalia, CA 93291

NOTICE OF DETERMINATION

Project Title: Update Conservation, Open Space, Recreation & Parks Element

Address/Location: General Plan Amendment No. 792 Environmental Doc. 88-59

Contact Person: Stan Tidman Phone: 738-3511

Project Description: Major update to the 1981 Element for a planning period to the year 2020

On the 5th day of June, 19 89, the X City Council
 Planning Commission of the City of Visalia considered the above-mentioned
project application and reached the following decision(s):

Upheld the finding that the subject project would not result in significant
environmental impact as stated in the X Negative Declaration filed with the
Clerk of the County of Tulare on _____

 Draft Environmental Impact Report

 Determined that significant impact might result and withheld action pending
preparation and review of an Environmental Impact Report.

 Determined that significant impact would result.

X Approved the project.

 Approved the project subject to the attached conditions.

 Denied approval of the project.

An Environmental Impact Report had X had not been prepared for this
project pursuant to the provisions of the CEQA prior to Council action.

Date June 7, 1989

Signed _____

Phyllis Cowley
Environmental Coordinator
City of Visalia

Environmental Document No. 88-59
X-Ref: GPA NO. 792
City of Visalia Planning Dept.

CITY OF VISALIA
707 W. ACEQUIA STREET
VISALIA, CA 93291

NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Project Title: General Plan Amendment No. 792, Draft Conservation, Open Space, Recreation & Parks Element

Address/Location: See Initial Study 88-59 (attached), Section I.B.

Contact Person: Stan Tidman Phone: 738-3511

Project Description: See Initial Study 88-59 (attached), Section I.A.

Pursuant to City Ordinance No. 2388, the environmental Coordinator of the City of Visalia has reviewed the proposed project described herein and has found that it will not result in any significant effect upon the environmental because of the reasons listed below:

Reasons for Negative Declaration:

Initial Study 88-59 (attached) has not identified any significant, adverse environmental impacts that may occur because of the project.

Copies of the plans and other documents relating to the subject project may be examined by interested parties at the office of the Environmental Coordinator, City Planning Department, in City Hall, at the above address. Appeals of this finding must be made in writing and filed with the City Clerk, City of Visalia prior to December 27, 1988.

Date: December 12, 1988

Signed:


Environmental Coordinator
City of Visalia

Environmental Document No. 88-59
Applicant: City of Visalia
Reference: GPA No. 792
Date: November 21, 1988

NEGATIVE DECLARATION OVERVIEW

I. GENERAL

A. Project Description

In June 1987, the City began a major update to the existing Conservation, Open Space, Recreation & Parks Element to the Visalia General Plan. The existing (1980) Element was adopted in 1981 for the planning period to 1990. This Element combines two state-mandated general plan elements (conservation and open space) with two optional City elements (recreation and parks). The purpose of the Element update is to:

- provide a more balanced treatment between conservation and open space issues with more traditional strengths of park planning and recreation programming
- develop a series of clear and concise goal, objective and policy statements and implementation strategies for the planning period to the year 2020
- create an improved Element format for easier use and reference

It is proposed that the City adopt the Draft as an element of the Visalia General Plan. It will update and supersede the 1980 Element. When adopted, the Element is to serve as a long-range guide for community development as well as a ready reference for daily use on issues involving conservation, open space, recreation and parks.

B. Location

The project applies to urban and agricultural areas within Visalia's Urban Area Boundary (planning area). This planning area encompasses approximately 34,400 square acres or about 53.75 square miles. Visalia is located in Tulare County which one of the most productive agricultural areas in the United States. Figure 1 illustrates Visalia and Tulare County's regional location within the state. Figure 2 shows the Visalia planning area.



CALIFORNIA

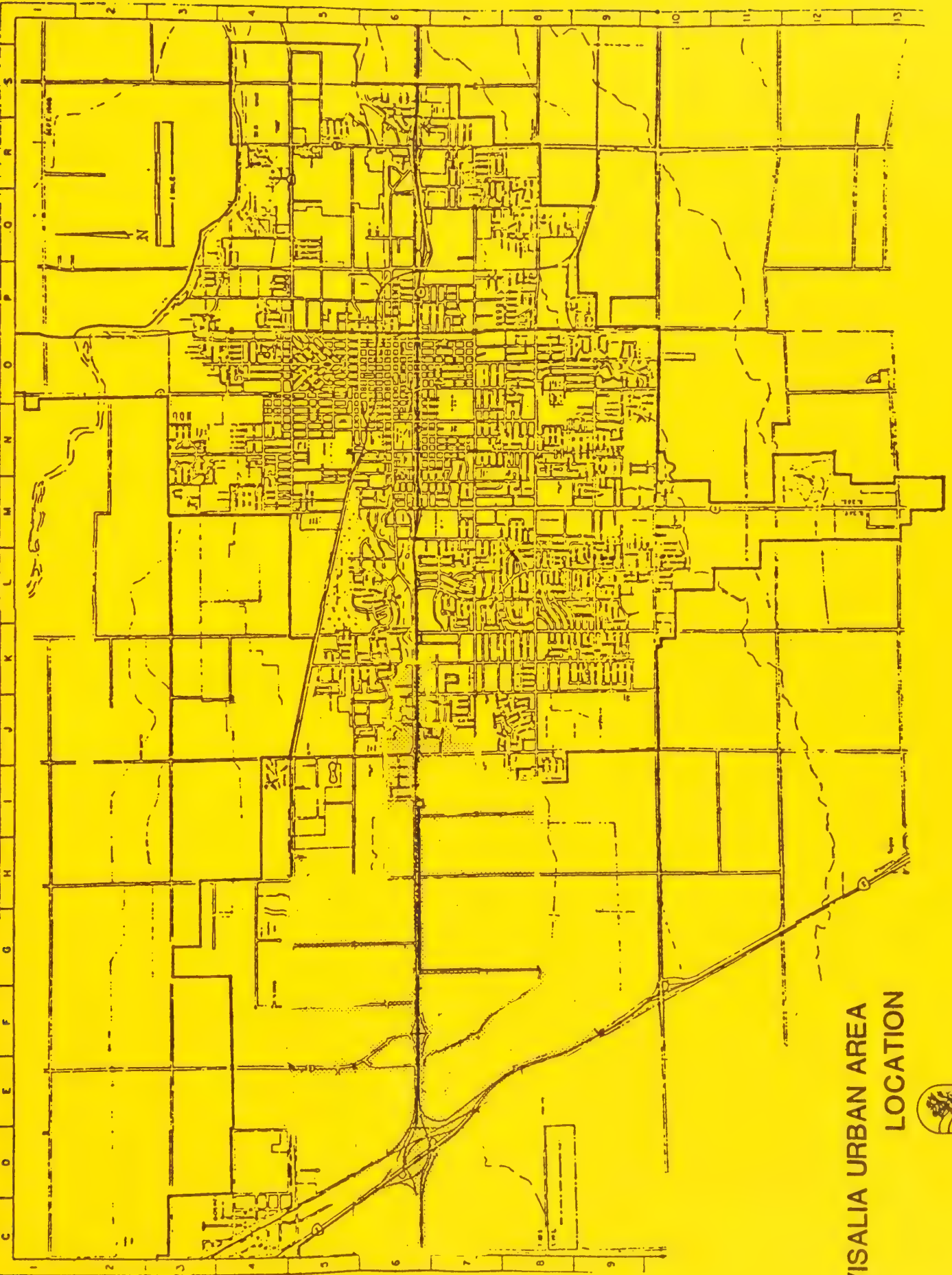
VISALIA

STATE/REGIONAL
LOCATION





VISALIA URBAN AREA LOCATION



C. Project Facts

The Draft Element is organized into five basic parts: 1) introduction and goal/objective summary; 2) existing conditions and needs assessment; 3) goals, objectives and implementing policies; 4) implementation strategies, and 5) appendices which outline community profiles for each of the City's four neighborhood quadrants and the recommended national park and facilities guidelines. The Draft cites five general goal statements with a series of supporting objectives, implementing policies and standards. A brief summary of each goal follows:

Goal 1: Conserve, restore and enhance significant natural, cultural and historic resources to sustain the Visalia planning area's environmental quality.

Because of the update project's objective to emphasize conservation and open space issues, the Draft's treatment of community waterways and wildlife/natural vegetation has been expanded. With regard to community waterways, the Draft calls out a series of objectives and implementing policies to protect and enhance the community's waterway resources. Corridors, along selected waterways, are identified to protect: 1) plant and wildlife habitats, 2) to maintain flood protection and irrigation functions, and 3) to establish open space links between various destinations (parks, Downtown, etc.) throughout the planning area. Standards are cited for selected waterways to buffer them from new adjacent urban development. A final waterway objective cites the need to continue to coordinate development of a community-wide waterway program considering all interests (water district, irrigation companies, public access, habitat protection, etc.).

The Draft's treatment of wildlife and natural vegetation revolves around protecting natural habitat along community waterways, restoring natural vegetation and protecting wildlife listed as rare, endangered, threatened and candidate species.

Goal 2: Create and protect open space for the preservation of natural resources.

This goal deals with preserving and protecting open space for natural resources, outdoor recreation, agricultural uses and for public health and safety in areas requiring special management or regulation such as the airport and wastewater treatment plant. Open space for natural resources and outdoor recreation are covered in Goals 1 and 2 respectively. The remainder of the goal's objectives and implementing policies are related to protecting viable agricultural land, airport protection and buffers around the treatment plant.

Goal 3: Develop a high quality public park system which provides adequate space and facilities for varied recreational opportunities which are conveniently accessible to all Visalia residents.

This goal lists out objectives related to park acquisition and development, location and design, efficient use of facilities, trails and

bikeways.

Goal 4: Provide a range of leisure, recreational and cultural programs and facilities that are accessible and affordable to all segments of the community.

This goal statement contains two primary objectives: 1) continuing the City's excellent record of providing recreation programs and facilities and 2) recognizing the importance of cultural arts and resources.

Goal 5: Structure an implementation program for achieving the policies of this element through a combination of public and private funds, regulatory processes and innovative strategies.

This Draft goal includes objectives for fund-raising and planning/regulatory tools to implement the objectives and policies outlined in the Draft. This section also outlines a list of proposed park projects by neighborhood quadrant. The majority of these projects are contained in the City's Capital Improvement Program and identified by the Storm Drainage Master Plan. The proposed projects are grouped into two-five-year plans through the year 2000.

II. ENVIRONMENTAL OVERVIEW

A. Setting

A Valley Oak forest and grasslands once covered the Visalia planning area. Agriculture and urban development have replaced most of this forest and grassland. The area's agricultural heritage has created a strong community economic base as well as a valued community rural landscape and open space system.

Because of its location, at the base of the Sierra Nevada and the Kaweah River's delta system, Visalia is laced with a number of waterways. These include the St. John's River, Mill Creek, Packwood Creek, and Cameron Creek as well as several irrigation ditches. Remnants of the area's Valley Oak forest remain along stretches of these waterways. Valley oak remnants combined with intermittent and perennial waterway flows have created numerous viable riparian plant and wildlife habitat areas. These riparian areas are highly sensitive complexes that support a variety of plant and wildlife.

Visalia's waterway network and its associated open space system has been a long-neglected community resource. This neglect is partially attributable to the lack of access. Largely hidden from public views, these last remnants of the Valley Oak forest, natural community landmarks, are slowly disappearing.

From a wildlife point-of-view, the San Joaquin kit fox (a state-listed 'threatened' and federally-listed ''endangered' species) potentially inhabits some or all of the City's planning area. According to the State Department of Fish & Game, kit fox sightings have been made in rural areas all around Visalia. Two surveys involving kit fox were conducted in

1987 in the City's Northeast Specific Plan and West Visalia Specific Plan areas. No kit fox sightings were recorded or were made during either survey. However, a series of recommended mitigation measures were outlined for future development proposals in the event that kit fox presence were found. Early consultation with California Department of Fish and Game, Region 4 staff indicates that potential kit fox range must be assumed because of numerous sightings in agricultural areas of the planning area.

According to the Department of Fish and Game, the presence of two other wildlife species, the Blunt-nosed Leopard Lizard and the Tipton Kangaroo Rat, in the Visalia planning area is highly unlikely. This conclusion is based on the lack of suitable habitat for these animals in the planning area. In addition, unlike the kit fox, these two species do not range over a large area or territory. Therefore, if suitable habitat does not exist in the planning area these species will not migrate into the area.

B. Environmental Impacts & Mitigation Measures

Adoption of the Draft Conservation, Open Space, Recreation & Parks Element will not result in any direct adverse environmental impacts. Its implementation may have several positive impacts on the planning area's conservation, open space, recreation and parks system. See the Initial Study for environmental effects and mitigation measures.

III. PROJECT COMPATIBILITY WITH ADOPTED PLANS & EXISTING ZONING

The Draft is consistent with the City's existing General Plan. With regard to the 1980 Element, The Draft continues and expands upon recreational programming and facility goals. 1980 Element Conservation & Beautification goals are addressed by the Draft's expanded treatment of preserving and enhancing natural, cultural and historic resources well as open space in the planning area. Further, the Draft calls out policies to establish and protect a community-wide waterway corridor system which will afford habitat protection, open space links to various City destination points, as well as buffer corridors from developing urban uses. In addition, the Draft recognizes and end encourages continued coordination of waterway programs with all interested property owners and agencies. The Draft complements 1980 Park development & Acquisition goals by outlining a number of implementing policies for park location and design, efficient use of facilities and trail/bikeway system.

The Draft is consistent with the existing Land Use & Circulation Element because it illustrates the location of proposed park and open spaces within the City's planning area. It also identifies ways to create transition and buffer areas among conservation/open space areas from future urban development. The Draft also provides general policy language to preserve agricultural areas and to protect open space surrounding the airport and wastewater treatment plant. The Draft will require amendments for consistency once the updated Circulation and Land Use Elements are updated.

The Draft Element is consistent with the General Plan's Historic Preservation Element because it presents supporting policies to protect

and preserve historic and archaeological resources in the planning area.

The Draft Element is consistent with the Northeast Specific Plan, St. John's River Park Master Plan, West Visalia Specific Plan, Background investigation on Aesthetic Use of Urban Creeks and Ditches Study and the Storm Drainage Master Plan. Each of these projects has involved long-standing issues related to waterway corridors and public access, habitat protection, recreation, recharge and detention basins and inter-agency coordination. Development of the Draft has been built-on, to a certain degree, from each of these project's assumptions, findings, standards, conclusions and recommendations.

Copies of the Draft and other documents relating to the update project may be examined by parties at the office of the Environmental Coordinator, Community Development Department, in City Hall - 707 W. Acequia Street, Visalia.

Initial Study and Summary Prepared by:



Stan Tidman, Senior Planner



Phyllis Coring, Environmental Coordinator

12-12-88

Date

NEGDECD.OC
87001

INITIAL STUDY
ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM

I. BACKGROUND

1. Name of Proponent City of Visalia
2. Address and Phone Number of Proponent _____
707 W. Acequia Street
Visalia, CA 93291
3. Date of Checklist Submitted November 21, 1988
4. Agency Requiring Checklist City of Visalia
5. Name of Proposal, if applicable Draft Conservation, Open Space,
Recreation & Parks Element

II. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

(Explanations of all "yes" and "maybe" answers are required on attached sheets.)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Maybe</u>	<u>No</u>
1. <u>Earth</u> . Will the proposal result in:			
a. Unstable earth conditions or in changes in geologic substructures?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
b. Disruptions, displacements, compaction or overcovering of the soil?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
c. Change in topography or ground surface relief features?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
d. The destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
e. Any increase in wind or water erosion of soil, either on or off the site?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
f. Changes in deposition or erosion of beach sands, or changes in siltation, deposition or erosion which may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed of the ocean or any bay, inlet or lake?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Maybe</u>	<u>No</u>
g. Exposure of people or property to geologic hazards such as earthquakes, landslides, mudslides, ground failure, or similar hazards?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
2. <u>Air</u> . Will the proposal result in:			
a. Substantial air emissions or deterioration of ambient air quality?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
b. The creation of objectionable odors?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
c. Alteration of air movement, moisture, or temperature, or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
3. <u>Water</u> . Will the proposal result in:			
a. Changes in currents, or the course of direction of water movements, in either marine or fresh waters?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
b. Changes in absorption rates, drainage patterns, or the rate and amount of surface runoff?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
c. Alterations to the course or flow of flood waters?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
d. Change in the amount of surface water in any water body?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
e. Discharge into surface waters, or in any alteration of surface water quality, including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen or turbidity?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
f. Alteration of the direction or rate of flow of ground waters?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
g. Change in the quantity of ground waters, either through direct additions or withdrawals, or through interception of an aquifer by cuts or excavations?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
h. Substantial reduction in the amount of water otherwise available for public water supplies?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Maybe</u>	<u>No</u>
i. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding or tidal waves?	_____	<u>X</u>	_____
4. <u>Plant Life</u> . Will the proposal result in:			
a. Change in the diversity of species, or number of any species of plants (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, and aquatic plants)?	<u>X</u>	_____	_____
b. Reduction of the numbers of any unique, rare or endangered species of plants?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
c. Introduction of new species of plants into an area, or in a barrier to the normal replenishment of existing species?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
d. Reduction in acreage of any agricultural crop?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
5. <u>Animal Life</u> . Will the proposal result in:			
a. Change in the diversity of species, or numbers of any species of animals (birds, land animals including reptiles, fish and shellfish, benthic organisms or insects)?	<u>X</u>	_____	_____
b. Reduction of the numbers of any unique, rare or endangered species of animals?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
c. Introduction of new species of animals into an area, or result in a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
d. Deterioration to existing fish or wildlife habitat?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
6. <u>Noise</u> . Will the proposal result in:			
a. Increases in existing noise levels?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
b. Exposure of people to severe noise levels?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
7. <u>Light and Glare</u> . Will the proposal produce new light or glare?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Maybe</u>	<u>No</u>
8. <u>Land Use</u> : Will the proposal result in a substantial alteration of the present or planned land use of an area?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
9. <u>Natural Resources</u> . Will the proposal result in:			
a. Increases in the rate of use of any natural resources?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
b. Substantial depletion of any non-renewable natural resource?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
10. <u>Risk of Upset</u> . Will the proposal involve:			
a. A risk of an explosion or the release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to, oil, pesticides, chemicals or radiation) in the event of an accident or upset conditions?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
b. Possible interference with an emergency response plan or an emergency evacuation plan?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
11. <u>Population</u> . Will the proposal alter the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
12. <u>Housing</u> . Will the proposal affect existing housing, or create a demand for additional housing?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
13. <u>Transportation/Circulation</u> . Will the proposal result in:			
a. Generation of substantial additional vehicular movement?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
b. Effects on existing parking facilities, or demand for new parking?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
c. Substantial impact upon existing transportation systems?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
d. Alterations to present patterns of circulation or movement of people and/or goods?	_____	<u>X</u>	_____
e. Alterations to waterborne, rail or air traffic?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Maybe</u>	<u>No</u>
f. Increase in traffic hazards to motor vehicles, bicyclists or pedestrians?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
14. <u>Public Services.</u> Will the proposal have an effect upon, or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas:			
a. Fire protection?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
b. Police protection?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
c. Schools?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
d. Parks or other recreational facilities?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
e. Maintenance of public facilities, including roads?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
f. Other governmental services?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
15. <u>Energy.</u> Will the proposal result in:			
a. Use of substantial amounts of fuel or energy?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
b. Substantial increase in demand upon existing sources of energy, or require the development of new sources of energy?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
16. <u>Utilities.</u> Will the proposal result in a need for new systems, or substantial alterations to the following utilities:			
a. Power or natural gas?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
b. Communications systems?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
c. Water?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
d. Sewer or septic tanks?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
e. Storm water drainage?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
f. Solid waste and disposal?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Maybe</u>	<u>No</u>
17. <u>Human Health.</u> Will the proposal result in:			
a. Creation of any health hazard or potential health hazard (excluding mental health)?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
b. Exposure of people to potential health hazards?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
18. <u>Aesthetics.</u> Will the proposal result in the obstruction of any scenic vista or view open to the public, or will the proposal result in the creation of an aesthetically offensive site open to public view?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
19. <u>Recreation.</u> Will the proposal result in an impact upon the quality or quantity of existing recreational opportunities?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
20. <u>Cultural Resources.</u>			
a. Will the proposal result in the alteration of or the destruction of a prehistoric or historic archaeological site?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
b. Will the proposal result in adverse physical or aesthetic effects to a prehistoric or historic building, structure, or object?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
c. Does the proposal have the potential to cause a physical change which would affect unique ethnic cultural values?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
d. Will the proposal restrict existing religious or sacred uses within the potential impact area?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
21. <u>Mandatory Findings of Significance.</u>			
a. Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range			

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Maybe</u>	<u>No</u>
of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
b. Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term, to the disadvantage of long-term, environmental goals? (A short-term impact on the environment is one which occurs in a relatively brief, definitive period of time while long-term impacts will endure well into the future.)	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
c. Does the project have impacts which are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project may impact on two or more separate resources where the impact on each resource is relatively small, but where the effect of the total of those impacts on the environment is significant.)	_____	_____	<u>X</u>
d. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	_____	_____	<u>X</u>

III. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION - See Negative Declaration overview and Initial Study (Exhibit A)

IV. DETERMINATION
(To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared. X

I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because the mitigation measures described on an attached sheet have been added to the project. A NEGATIVE DECLARATION WILL BE PREPARED. _____

I find the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required. _____

12-12-88

Date


Signature

For _____

DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS & MITIGATIONS

Checklist Item	Effect & Mitigation Measure
3. Water (i)	<p>The project will not increase exposure to flood hazards. The Draft emphasizes maximum public access to community waterways while minimizing adverse impacts to riparian vegetation and habitat areas. The Draft promotes the creation of waterway corridors with bikepaths and trails to link parks and open spaces. Greater public access to these waterways and associated open space may increase the risk of accidental drowning and/or other water-related accidents.</p> <p>Increasing waterway and open space access by developing trails and bikeways will result in greater community awareness of the planning area's open space. Developing this bikeway and trails system along waterways will result in greater numbers of users and an assumed corresponding increase in safety and security.</p> <p>The primary mitigation measure for this water safety concern cited in the Draft is to conduct a community-wide waterway corridor feasibility study which focuses on public safety and liability issues. Additional feasibility study objectives would be: 1) to provide a framework to coordinate waterway operations and maintenance activities among all entities with waterway interests (i.e., City, Kaweah Delta Water Conservation District, irrigation ditch companies, California Department of Fish & Game, California Reclamation Board, etc.) and 2) to develop landscaping techniques sensitive to both riparian revegetation as well as to urban transitions along waterways. These techniques would emphasize the City's evolving riparian landscaping practices which create scenic qualities while minimizing direct waterway access by planting groundcovers such as wild roses, blackberries, etc., and 3) to ensure access and turnarounds are planned for adequate police and emergency vehicle maneuvering.</p> <p>A supplemental implementing policy related to water safety was developed from public and staff</p>

input will be inserted into the Draft. This policy will direct that pilot-demonstration projects be developed for the St. John's River, Mill and Packwood Creeks through the City's Capital Improvement Program funding to design and construct waterway corridor and trail improvements.

4. Plant Life & 5. Animal Life

The project will not result in adverse impacts to planning area plant or animal life. The Draft focuses on protecting natural habitat along community waterways, restoring natural vegetation and protecting wildlife listed as rare, endangered, threatened and candidate. These Draft's waterway and wildlife sections provide or clarify what have been merely verbal and unwritten policies which have been difficult to consistently interpret and apply. These sections of the Draft provide an objective framework to consider proposals involving waterways, plants and wildlife treatment. The proposed community waterway corridor system will facilitate the conservation, restoration and enhancement of area plant and wildlife habitat.

Through surveys carried out in 1987 for planning studies, several significant habitat areas are called out in the Draft for special planning consideration. Briefly, these areas include: 1) St. John's River Islands, 2) Mill Creek/Evans Ditch 'Jungle', 3) Jennings' Ditch 'Hobo Jungle', 4) northeast corner of Ben Maddox Way and Main Street, and 5) general (not yet surveyed) areas where waterways and roadways intersect; particularly those with Valley Oaks.

Through the Draft's public participation phases and early consultation with the California Department of Fish and Game (see attached November 3, 1988 letter), treatment of potential suitable habitat for the San Joaquin kit fox will be expanded. Figure 2 (Vegetation & Wildlife), text, and implementing policies will be amended to indicate the potential kit fox range is not restricted to only areas west of the City as described in the Draft; but to the entire planning area outside current developed urban areas.

The Draft recognizes that development proposals which occur in the vicinity of community waterways and natural areas are to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis through the City's Site

Plan Review and CEQA review processes. The Draft does, however, provide general guidelines and mitigation measures for future waterway vicinity development which will eliminate the necessity to do extensive environmental reviews and studies for each proposal. In this respect, the Draft serves as a consensus document among various regulatory agencies and interested parties such as California Department of Fish and Game, Reclamation Board, private property owners, developers and the City.

As a further clarification, a supplemental implementing policy will be developed to amend the City's Site Plan Review and CEQA processes to establish when California Department of Fish and Game early consultation is required for development proposals.

8. Land Use

The project will not result in substantial alteration to the present or planned area land uses. The Draft's emphasis on preserving and enhancing conservation and open space areas will also allow these elements to act as buffers and transition areas between viable agricultural areas and future urban development. The City's update to the 1976 Land Use Element is exploring this issue.

13. Transportation

The Draft proposes alterations to the City's circulation system by promoting development of a community-wide 'loop' system of bikeways and trails. This conceptual system would tie together a trail and bikeway network of selected east-west waterways and arterials along with north-south Class II bike lanes. This community-wide system will: 1) aid in delineating traditional recreation space from habitat areas, 2) provide greater waterway access, 3) link scenic and recreational opportunities, 4) connect planning area destination points like schools, the Downtown, College of the Sequoias, Tulare County Civic Center and regional facilities on the City's edges like Plaza, Mooney Grove and Cutler Parks. Specific details of this conceptual system are to be detailed by a Bicycle Committee working under the authority of the City Park & Recreation Commission.

14. Public Services (a), (b), (d) (e)

Project implementation will require City police and fire/emergency personnel to patrol and to respond to calls in the waterway corridor and

trail areas developed along community waterways. Development of these corridors and trails will require police and fire review to ensure that adequate vehicle access and maneuvering area is provided. In addition, these spaces should be designed to allow 'drive-by' surveillance (direct line-of-sight) into park and open spaces to facilitate police patrols.

Development of waterway corridors and trails will supplement the City's traditional park and open space system. Operations and maintenance practices for these largely riparian areas are currently being developed along the St. John's River Park. Varying planting cycles and experimenting with revegetation and maintenance techniques will be continue to evolve as the City expands this riparian system. It is anticipated that the community's environmental and conservation groups will be active participants in maintaining this waterway system. The Tulare County Conservation Corps has expressed interest in providing cost-effective labor for riparian vegetation nd maintenance activities.

18. Aesthetics

The Visalia planning area contains a distinct rural landscape and open space system which has become a physical, economic and cultural community resource. Implementation of this project will promote greater public access and community awareness of this system. It will also encourage protection and enhancement of it.

19. Recreation

Implementation of the project will encourage the continuing development and maintenance of the City's park/open space and associated leisure and cultural system.

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME



REGION 4
1234 E. Shaw Ave.
Fresno, CA 93710
209-222-3761

November 3, 1988

Mr. Stan Tidman, Senior Planner
City of Visalia
Planning Department
707 W. Acequia Street
Visalia, CA 93291

Dear Stan:

Subject: Conservation, Open Space, Recreation, and Parks Element
of the Visalia General Plan

I have reviewed the draft Conservation, Open Space, Recreation, and Parks Element to the City's General Plan which will guide the long-range planning for conservation of natural resources within the City's Urban Area Boundary. The most significant natural resources that will be affected by this plan are riparian areas associated with the many creeks and rivers running through Visalia, and the endangered San Joaquin kit fox.

The City has taken a progressive approach to the opportunity for managing urban waterways. Riparian areas are highly sensitive vegetation complexes that are critical to the survival of a variety of wildlife species. The Department supports the plan's strategy to incorporate riparian habitat protection and enhancement with limited recreational uses. We encourage the City to maintain all areas of riparian habitat in their natural condition, and design public facilities such as picnic areas, and hiking/bike paths outside of these sensitive zones as much as possible. The community will still benefit from the rural and scenic qualities of the riparian area, while reducing human intrusion into the riparian corridor which has the potential to degrade or eliminate wildlife habitat.

The plan seems to be lacking in its discussion of the possibility of the state-listed (threatened) and federally-listed (endangered) San Joaquin kit fox inhabiting the plan area. Kit fox have been sighted in rural areas all around Visalia from Goshen to Ivanhoe, Exeter, Farmersville, and near Visalia at the intersection of county roads J15 and J30. The Tulare County Agricultural Commissioners office maintains a kit fox range map that includes sightings and road kills documented since 1972. In the plan, the map labeled Figure 2 indicates an area of potential kit fox habitat. This area should be expanded to include all rural areas surrounding the plan area. As mentioned on page 14 of the plan, kit fox often inhabit atypical areas such as vacant lots, orchards, vineyards, dump sites, etc. The plan should recognize that all of the area within the plan boundary, but

Mr. Stan Tidman

2

November 3, 1988

outside current developed urban areas, can be considered potential kit fox habitat. This will insure that appropriate measures are taken to survey for and protect San Joaquin kit fox when future development is considered.

In Section 5.1 Fund Raising (pg. 75), you may want to include the Tulare County Fish and Game Fine Commission as a possible source of funding. The money in this fund comes from the collection of fines for Fish and Game violations, and must be spent on fish and wildlife enhancement or education. Revegetation of riparian corridors would be an appropriate expenditure.

In the discussion in section 1.4 Wildlife and Natural Vegetation (pg. 54-6), it may be beneficial to rank the riparian areas for acquisition and enhancement or revegetation in terms of highest priority. The city could use the list as a reference for mitigation measures for future projects that would impact significant natural habitat within the city planning area (e.g. the Cal Trans project to widen Hwy. 198 where mature oak trees will be lost). A prioritized list would also assist the Department in consideration of mitigation for other projects the Department reviews such as county, Bureau of Reclamation, and local water conservation districts.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input during the early stages of planning. Adoption and implementation of this plan may facilitate Department review of projects during the CEQA process. Projects designed according to the guidelines outlined in this plan may significantly reduce conflicts and impacts to riparian areas and the associated wildlife. Should you have any questions or require additional information, please feel free to contact me at (209) 594-5330.

Sincerely,

Gail Presley

Gail Presley
Wildlife Biologist

cc: DFG, Fresno



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